Coming Together:

Lessons on Collaboration from California Works for Better Health

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Executive Summary

Since 1997, California Works for Better Health, a multi-year initiative, has sought to reduce health disparities in four regions of California: Fresno, Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Diego.

Underlying the California Works for Better Health (CWBH) initiative has been a combination of three intersecting notions: (1) that improving job quality for low-income residents can lead to significant enhancements in health; (2) that one fruitful way to improve such employment outcomes is to enhance the capacity of community organizations to engage with regional economies, both through direct service as labor market intermediaries and as policy advocates; and (3) that a key way to magnify the impact of organizational activities in this field is to engage in deep, long-lasting and transformative collaborative partnerships.

The last of these notions—collaboration as a way to move projects and policy— was the starting point of the CWBH effort. Along with its own collaborative partner, the Rockefeller Foundation, The California Endowment set out to identify community-based organizations in each of the four regions and invested heavily in activities intended to develop the skills, resources and preferences for working together. The hope was that these investments would eventually feed into the sort of powerful and skilled implementation that would lead to tangible improvements in health. While still early to measure health impacts, the outcomes as of 2007 on the central goal of collaboration have been mixed: some organizations and regions exhibited high rates of cohesion while others experienced some degree of fragmentation.

This document reports on the CWBH experience, focusing on the collaborative process, especially on the state of the collaboratives at the time of this writing. As the details below make clear, we reviewed relevant written materials; collected secondary data to better understand the regional context; interviewed a wide range of individuals in organizations, foundations, and elsewhere; and also relied on our own experience of having provided some technical assistance early in the CWBH effort. Despite this research, we cannot claim that this is an exhaustive study.

Still, the lessons we draw might be useful both to The Endowment and to the broader philanthropic community, particularly given the buzzword that collaboration has become.

Our general analytical conclusions and the story that we tell of the CWBH experience reflect six major themes. They are:

Introductions and Connections: Setting and Keeping a Good Tone

An initiative's beginning—its conceptualization, the mix of selected partners and the state of the relationships—count, and will reverberate throughout the life of an initiative. It is important that there be a clear understanding of the role of the coordinators of any collaborative, and that the accountability of collaborative partners to each other and to their funders is fostered through agreed upon governance structures. Time spent in relationship-building, particularly when groups do not know each other well before, is time well-spent. At the same time, groups are more likely to bond by *doing* something together so that they have a sense of collective accomplishment and identity.

These were all important issues in the CWBH experience, partly because some of the groups were already ongoing allies, others had little or no experience in working together, and some wondered why they or others had been selected for the initiative. Getting to know and trust one another took time, but the schedule was accelerated to some degree by the need the Rockefeller Foundation felt to show results on employment outcomes. Bonding at a more rapid pace might have been possible but this was complicated by other factors including overlapping roles and responsibilities of technical assistance providers and the coordinators, and a multileveled and complex theory of change that seemed to take time for many participants to figure out.

Despite the bumps, the collaboratives did develop new levels of trust and interaction. The deepest connections were formed in the course of activities: working on a Community Benefits Agreement in San Diego, organizing a landmark conference on concentrated poverty in Fresno, developing a high school leadership program in Sacramento, and forging innovative workforce strategies in health, entertainment and construction in Los Angeles. Working together to achieve common goals helped the organizations work through their frustrations with parts of the process and the fact that they could find

such common ground is testimony to the longer-term investments in relationship-building that occurred early in the project.

Location and Potential: Understanding the Importance of Place

The regional and neighborhood context can set important limits on what is possible and what is not. In regions where the economy is thriving and business is receptive, a community-based collaboration around work and health can find many partners; in regions where the economy is slow, there may also be potential intersections given the mutuality of interest in saving the economy and aiding the poor. Still, each region differs in terms of its economic structures, political opportunities, and policy landscape, and no one strategy fits all. Neighborhood matters as well, with collaboration perhaps being easier where there is some shared and proximate space.

The vastly different terrains of the California regions had a profound impact on the strategies and opportunities for the CWBH partners. In the political hothouse and robust economy of Los Angeles, groups could pursue strategies aimed at making business and the public sector do a better job of connecting the poor to employment. In the more conservative and economically weak setting of Fresno, groups sought to position themselves as allies to business and were more likely to nudge rather than push the public sector. The regional context, in short, influenced how the groups would work together and with whom and how they would work with others as a collaborative.

Neighborhood mattered as well. In Sacramento, the two collaborative partners were in close proximity and were similar organizationally; similarities in constituency and strategy made them able to find an easy mix that is likely to last long beyond the CWBH effort. In Fresno the partners operated in overlapping neighborhoods which helped to facilitate their collaboration. In San Diego, one organization was rooted in a geographically specific Latino community, another represented a geographically scattered African American community, and a third was an intermediary devoted to the broad regional interests of labor; it was a recipe for dispersion. Some of this neighborhood and organizational dissimilarity was a function of the CWBH design, which had a combination of a place-based focus and a broad regional perspective; getting the two more aligned would be useful for future efforts in this vein.

Diversity, Decisions and Power: Finding the Optimal Mix

Like others, we believe that including many different actors can create coalitional strength. However, organizations can also be so different that collaboration can begin to feel forced and false. Within collaboratives, it may be more important to have a single lead organization with broad legitimacy, rather than always relying on democratic processes. On the other hand, power differences within a collaborative can create tensions. Setting the parameters for collaborative relationships seems to have been easier in those regions that adopted a clear governance and decision-making structure.

CWBH brought together a wide range of organizations, including community development corporations, social service centers, policy intermediaries and community organizers. The oldest organization of the group, Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee on Anti-Poverty in San Diego (MAAC), was founded in 1965, and the newest organization Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development (FWCED) was founded in early 2000 with a great deal of their initial support coming from the CWBH initiative. In some regions, there seems to have been a mismatch of capacity and organizational styles and this affected collaborative possibilities. Where organizations were well-matched in age or experience, as in Sacramento and Fresno, collaboration was easier; in San Diego and Los Angeles, differences demanded extra attention. In most cases, collective projects worked best when one organization was fully committed to an effort and would take a lead; in Fresno, responsibility was more shared and this worked well in that setting.

Power differences can also come from another direction. While it is often good for foundations to push the envelope to jump-start collaborations and draw new connections between issues, foundation directives and technical assistance that are "top-down" can also strain relations—striking the right balance of being directive and being responsive with grantees can be challenging. The last few years of CWBH have involved a less directive structure; in that context, many of the collaboratives have become more effective and found their own reason and rationale for coming together and staying together.

Conflict and Cooperation: Accepting Tensions, Push-Back and Growth

For lasting relationships, collaborative partners must be willing to invest the necessary time and energy to building an initiative. If these relationships are meaningful, they will inevitably involve some level of tension and conflict, and thus groups should learn to become comfortable with at least some level of conflict. Conflict, in short, can be a healthy part of long-term collaborative organizing and advocacy efforts rather than a sign of dysfunction. Indeed, a certain level of tension and conflict should be expected to emerge internally within collaboratives, as well as externally with other agencies and leaders over policy issues, and with the funders crafting the plan over who sets the direction of the plan.

The CWBH experience was not a tale of simple harmony. The organizations had their own tensions to work out, including whether they wanted to stay in the process; several community groups departed the collaborative structure in the first few years. The two initial funders also found themselves deciding to shift in different directions, with the Rockefeller Foundation continuing to support the effort but removing themselves from the day-to-day management. Some groups struggled with each other, often quietly, about power differences, levels of mutual respect, and whether their primary commitment was to organizing or service delivery. Meanwhile, virtually all the collaboratives "pushed back" on the funders, the technical assistance providers and the evaluators. And when the collaboratives became engaged in the work for which they had been selected—improving workforce and health outcomes for poor communities—they often found themselves in some conflict with key political and policy figures over the communities whose needs they represented. For example, in Los Angeles, arguments that the entertainment industry was not doing enough for poor residents were accurate but challenging; in San Diego, a conservative and developer-friendly political structure found the collaborative's focus on community benefits not just novel but uncomfortable.

The fascinating point is that these various conflicts were actually high points of clarification and energy. In Sacramento, the departure of the partner that had the most experience in community organizing actually led the remaining two organizations to develop more capacities and commitments in that regard.

In Fresno, where harmony among the collaborative organizations was the order of the day, conflicts with the city over housing strategies and with business over job development actually helped establish the collaborative as a respected part of the calculus of local leadership. The "push-back" from the collaboratives to the Foundation also helped shift the program in productive ways—and helped the regional collaboratives bond. Conflict and consensus are often seen as two ends of a continuum; in fact, collaboration that involves organizational growth and true social change includes both.

Mission Shift and Mission Drift: Making the Best of Changes to the Plan

Organizations are more likely to stay in a collaborative if it is consistent with their long-term mission—and they are more likely to be authentic in that collaborative if their participation is driven by that mission and not simply by access to resources. At the same time, circumstances change and so do missions. The challenge lies in changing strategic direction based on learning and experience, rather than simply changing in response to external pressures, particularly from funders. Ultimately, the success of collaboratives in promoting meaningful mission "shift" rather than mission "drift" lies in their ability to understand changing

opportunities, engage partners and funders in ways that involve mutual transformation, and find ways of moving forward that are consistent with their basic principles.

It was not an easy task to find groups whose missions already matched the work the foundation program officers had in mind. On the one hand, the field of work-health connections is relatively new and groups generally worked on one issue or the other; on the other, the theory of change involved multiple skills of community organizing, policy development and workforce training and placement, and most organizations had a specialty in one or two of these arenas. Of the grantees that received CWBH funding, those that were most secure and defined about their own basic mission were able to weather some early hiccups in the process; some of the less experienced organizations found themselves following directives and directions rather than sticking to their own basic vision.

How did this coalition of the billing become a partnership of the willing? Partly it involved simply hanging in there and developing relationships that then persisted. But several organizations also found themselves transformed by the experience: groups in Sacramento and San Diego added

strength and resources to their community organizing efforts; organizations in Los Angeles found that having a handle on the implementation of workforce development programs satisfied the need for follow-up to winning policy victories; the three organizations in Fresno found that aligning their missions and working together led to a "branding" that strengthened all the organizations individually. The CWBH was decidedly not the result of existing coalitions that then approached the foundations to support their work; rather, it was from the beginning a foundation-driven effort. In the end, however, some promising and authentic partnerships developed.

Work and Focus: Finding Strategies That Bond and That Matter

Collaboratives seem to work best when there is a concrete project to work on, and the focus is on getting the work done rather than on simply building a collaborative. But this means that groups also have to know *what* works to achieve desired outcomes. Having a toolkit of ready strategies is important—technical assistance should be as much about appropriate approaches as it is about organizational capacity in order to build effective collaboration. Also shifting from service work to policy advocacy and

organizing, or vice versa, is extremely difficult and rather than combining both in every single organization, it may be best to let each group of the collaborative play the part that suits it best.

As noted earlier, the CWBH collaboratives seemed to bond more tightly once they had concrete projects to work on—a community benefits agreement in San Diego, a regional jobs initiative in Fresno, sectoral workforce planning in Los Angeles, and job development and placement in Sacramento. While the collaboratives probably could have spent more time on process and capacity-building early in the grant period, many of the organizations also grew frustrated with too much time spent in meetings. This was partly because technical assistance had not yet been streamlined to meet specific needs—when the technical assistance evolved and as projects got underway, the collaborative eased into a more productive set of relationships.

The collaboratives also began to see themselves more as team efforts. The early conception involved all the individual groups becoming more proficient in policy analysis, community organizing, and job placement—but these are very different functions

and activities in one arena (such as advocating with agencies for a policy change) can come into conflict with another (such as working with those agencies to place clients). Some of the collaborative organizations did try to incorporate multiple missions—several community development corporations rediscovered organizing and several organizing groups learned about the challenges of project implementation. But a collaborative is really supposed to be more than the sum of its parts—and to become that, the different parts need to be clear and sometimes identified with particular groups coming to the table.

Monitoring and Evaluating: Honoring the Process and Allowing for Chance

Funders require reports and results, and rightfully so. In terms of collaboration, however, unintended consequences may be the most interesting and the most fruitful results. It is also generally difficult to measure all the impacts of collaboration, some of which may be outside the original plan and many of which require change and adjustment in expectations. For example, bilateral partnerships within collaboratives may be as important as the strength of the whole, and other connections made through the collaboratives can lead to some unexpected opportunities.

Collaborations are often difficult to quantify and CWBH was no exception. One of the most obvious ways of measuring success—actual placement of clients in jobs—captured only one aspect of the theory of change. The capacity to analyze policy, organize communities or move the needle on health, for example, is not fully measured by placement, nor is the development of collaborative capacities on the part of grantees. Evaluators had to be flexible in determining what to look at and when, and the organizations sometimes felt like the metrics did not square with their mission. These became more aligned over time, particularly as the experience unfolded and the foundations began to understand exactly what they had unleashed with their support.

Even then, some of the most significant results of the collaborations fell out of an expanded set of metrics. Most striking was the development of new relationships outside the collaborative—in San Diego, for example, MAAC became an early member of an interfaith organizing effort that staged the largest marches on social justice issues in the region's history; in Fresno, the anchor partners found themselves linking up with business groups interested in recovering the regional economy.

In Los Angeles, CWBH organizations found themselves working with new employer efforts and strategies to redo the city's general plan while in Sacramento, the two partners found themselves more engaged with community organizing and leadership development. In short, the lessons learned in working together translated well beyond the immediate partnerships and opened up new ways of forging alliances and doing business.

CWBH was, at times, a rocky experience—groups dropped out and came in, technical assistance may have been too much and too soon, and foundation–collaborative relationships were sometimes strained. Despite these challenges and issues, important partnerships were built, significant capacities were created, and critical regional reach was achieved in virtually all the CWBH areas. Whether the collaborations will persist beyond the funding is beyond the scope of this report but it seems that some will. This is particularly striking since these were mostly "arranged marriages," a starting point that can often be problematic; many of these, however, blossomed into sustained commitments and relationships, and the achievements in the realms of both policy and placement have been impressive.

What are the take-away lessons for the future, particularly for those in the philanthropic field that are trying to promote collaboratives in their own giving agenda? We offer here seven:

(1) Build and design a collaborative from the ground up. Trying to create collaboratives between organizations that do not have previous relationships, based on theoretical models of change not rooted in particular regions, creates challenges. While there may be good reasons to do so, there are also opportunities to expand existing work, building on either existing relationships or nascent acquaintances based on already perceived synergies. Organizing collaboratives where there are existing relationships helps provide a running start for the collaborative work. As one CWBH grantee remarked, "A natural process for selecting partners is needed."

(2) Understand the context. Funders can bring valuable outside perspectives to regional collaborations, but they first need to develop an understanding of the local and regional context. This can involve data analysis to understand the limits of what is possible in terms of potential collaboration and the terrain in which action will take place. Funders also

need to assess existing networks, identifying pre-existing relationships and working with potential collaborative members in the very beginning design stages of collaborative initiatives.

(3) Take the time to find common ground. Time devoted to relationship building and governance structures is necessary. The shared experience of co-design and coexistence creates a road map for working together and finding shared goals. Having a shared or complementary geography may facilitate the process by reducing the competition for limited resources but coming together with common languages, strategies and projects is always possible if there is goodwill and vision.

(4) One size does not fit all. Partnerships can range from aligning efforts to coordinating activities to fully collaborating on goals and strategies. All require effort and all have their benefits. Getting the third of these possibilities, where relationships are deep and trust is high, will most likely take longer than expected and may not be the model for all coalitional efforts. Moreover, not every group has to mirror the set of capabilities that one expects to characterize the collaborative; the point is to combine capacities.

(5) Understand conflict as part of the process. Collaboration tends to conjure up images of harmonious interactions. But when relationships are well developed, there is room to challenge each other and that will take the work further. Conflict is a healthy part of the collaborative process, and its absence may actually indicate more superficial partnerships. "Push-back" from the grantees can actually enhance project design—and when social change is on the giving agenda, some degree of conflict with other organizations and leaders is to be expected.

(6) Keep the design simple and the expectations clear. The very factor of collaboration takes energy; nesting this in an overly complex theory of change can be overwhelming. This is especially true if the emphasis of the work shifts over time as the theory itself is worked out. The measurement of impacts is important but the expectations for grantees should be clear. At the same time, evaluators, funders, and others need to broaden their perspective of what counts: qualitative changes—in organization capacity to collaborate or shifts in mission—are often the most important, and it is some of the unexpected changes in collaborative organizations that might have the longest afterlife.
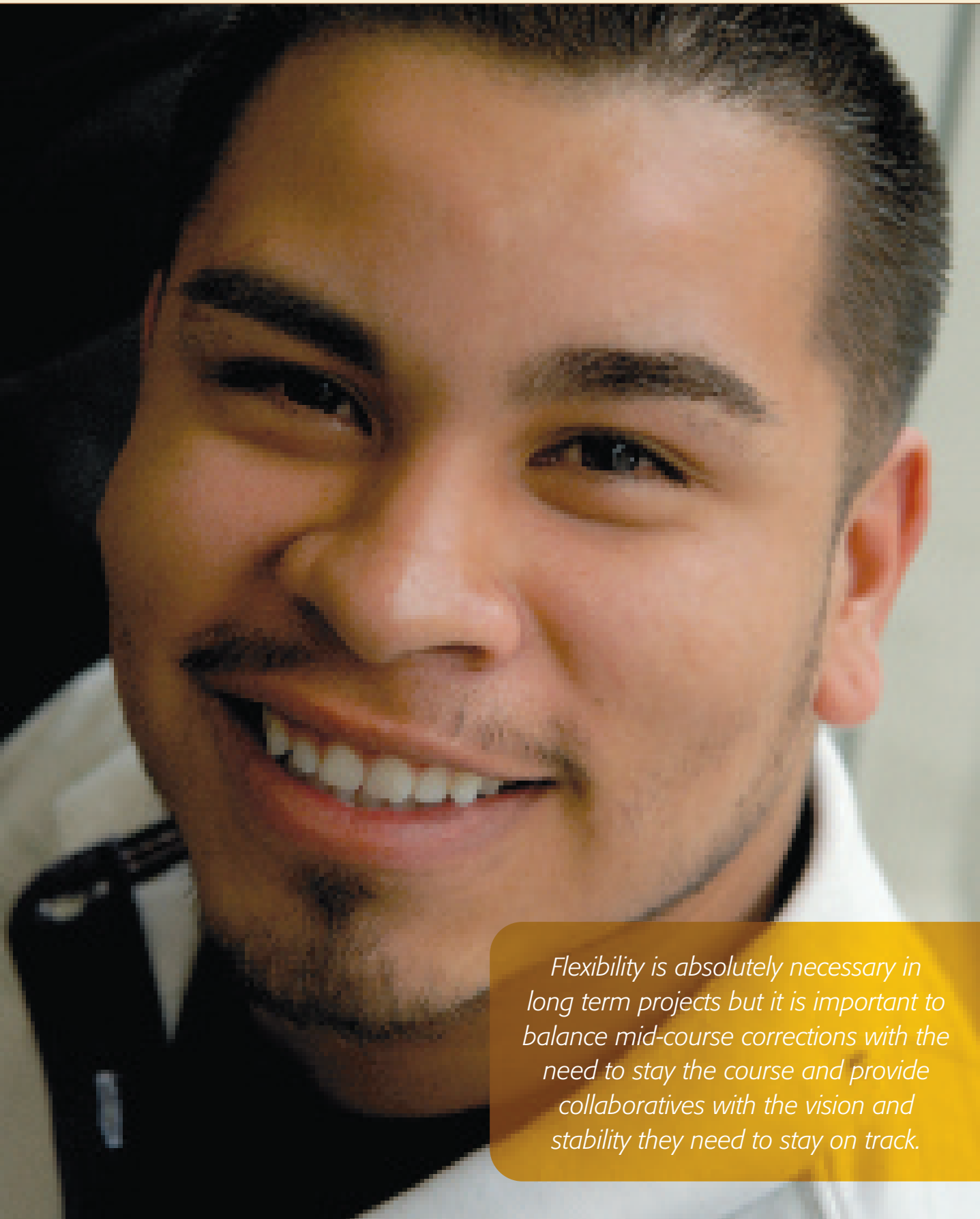
(7) Stay the course and find the balance. Flexibility is absolutely necessary in long term projects, but it is important to balance mid-course corrections with the need to stay the course and provide collaboratives with the vision and stability they need to stay on track. It will involve frustration—change often only looks good at the end. Sticking with it, both by collaborative partners and by funders, is key. It is through these time-consuming and sometimes difficult processes that authentic relationships can form.

Collaboration is certainly more art than science. There is much that foundations can learn about collaboration from the CWBH initiative. But equally important is the learning that took place amongst the participants. In the words of one of the grantee partners, "This collaborative serves as a model for us to learn how to collaborate and network with others in the region….The CWBH theory and model may serve as an example in the future for others."

CWBH has certainly involved aspects that are all too rare in the contemporary field of community development: a commitment to long-term support; a requirement that organizations move beyond the well-trod ground of place-based community development; efforts to build new configurations that cross constituencies, types of organizations (e.g. service/organizing/community development) and fields of work (e.g. work and health); and the acknowledgement that initiatives should try to build regional perspectives and understand sources of power if they are to actually change policy and impact outcomes.

These have been ambitious goals and pursuing them has involved significant commitments by the funders. In the course of the period we examine, the collaboratives have sometimes fallen short but they have more often than not achieved quite significant results. With the early years behind them, the promise of much more is there—as evidenced by inspiring current activities, such as the attempt to build a construction academy for youth in Los Angeles or the effort to create a new citywide consensus on ending poverty in Fresno. Coming together has sometimes been hard; staying together to fulfill the mission will be the test of whether the early investments in getting to know each other can pay off in ways that will continue to make a difference in the employment and health outcomes for some of California's most disadvantaged residents.

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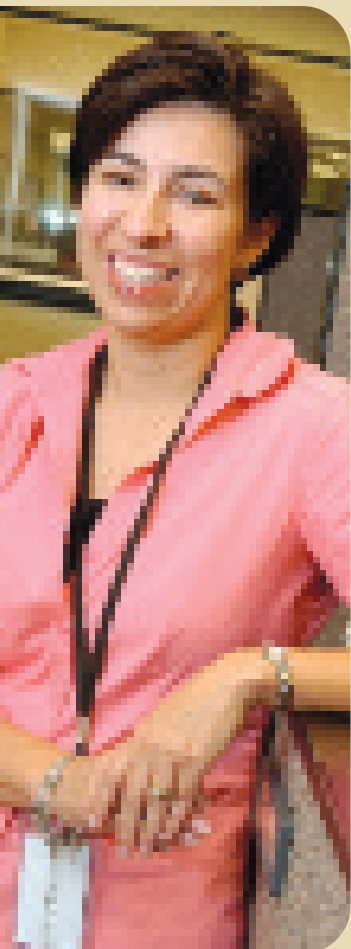
Introduction and Background

In 1997, The California Endowment and the Rockefeller Foundation launched a planning process that ultimately led to a major, multi-year initiative designed to help reduce health disparities in four regions of California: Fresno, Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Diego.[1]

Called *California Works for Better Health* (CWBH), the initiative is based on the belief that improving employment outcomes and job quality can lead to significant enhancements in health. Central to this effort is also the belief that a particularly effective way to improve employment outcomes for low-income residents is to enhance the capacity of multiple community organizations to engage regionally and to collaboratively link direct service with advocacy efforts aimed at insuring that public and private resources are better directed at linking community residents with regional employment opportunities.

The multiple parts of the theory of change in CWBH—that improving work opportunities can impact health disparities, that regions are an effective scale for both service and policy in

creating these work opportunities, and that community collaboratives are an appropriate vehicle for service delivery and policy influence—are all of great interest to philanthropy, community groups and academics. The complexity of the model is also of interest: bringing multiple different elements of change together, creating a confluence that is potentially rich in its transformative capacity for both individual organizations and the entire community development field. At the same time, complexity also makes evaluation and assessment a challenge because results obtained or not obtained could be due to one of many factors—a problem not found in less ambitious philanthropic initiatives or the sort of "natural experiments," complete with treatment and control groups, preferred by some social scientists.

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[1] The Rockefeller Foundation remained a funding partner throughout most of the initiative although their management role changed.

As the CWBH initiative enters its final foundation-supported phase, The Endowment has contracted with a research team associated with Matrix Consulting to unpack the various elements in the theory of change as part of assessing aspects of the overall project. The team includes several individuals who have long stood at the intersection of the academy and community advocacy: Manuel Pastor, former director of the Center for Justice, Tolerance and Community (CJTC) at U.C. Santa Cruz and now a Professor of Geography and Ethnic Studies at USC; Rachel Rosner, former research director for the United Farm Workers and a research associate for the CJTC; Chris Benner, former research director for Working Partnerships, a labor affiliated think tank in San Jose, and now an Associate Professor of Community Development at U.C. Davis; and Martha Matsuoka, former organizer for Urban Habitat in the Bay Area and now an Assistant Professor in Urban and Environmental Policy at Occidental College in Los Angeles. Perhaps as important, these individuals have also long stood in and around the CWBH experience: they were part of a larger research team that conducted an early analysis for The Endowment and the Rockefeller Foundation that helped to determine which regions were selected for the CWBH investment, and they ran a workshop on regional equity organizing for the selected grantees at their first state-wide gathering in February 2001.

What We Were Looking for, What We Found

This is the first of three reports we are writing on the initiative, with our focus here on the collaborative experience within CWBH, particularly the tensions, challenges and successes in forming lasting partnerships. The overarching research question for this report was:

What factors and processes contributed to building, maintaining, and moving collaboratives forward, and what was learned about collaboration through the CWBH experience?

The key findings of our research may be grouped into the following areas:

Introductions and Connections: Setting and Keeping a Good Tone
A collaborative's beginning—its conceptualization, the mix of selected partners, and the state of the relationships—count, and will reverberate throughout the life of an initiative. It is important that there is a clear understanding of the role of the collaborative coordinators, and that accountability of collaborative partners is fostered through agreed upon governance structures. Time spent in relationship-building, particularly when groups do not know each other well before, is time well-spent. At the same time, groups are more likely to bond by *doing* something together so that they have a sense of collective accomplishment and identity.

Location and Potential: Understanding the Importance of Place

The regional and neighborhood context can set important limits on what is possible and what is not. In regions where the economy is thriving and business is receptive, a community-based collaboration around work and health can find many partners—but each region differs in terms of its economic structures, political opportunities and policy landscape, and no one strategy fits all. Neighborhood matters as well, with collaboration perhaps being easier where there is some shared and proximate space.

Diversity, Decision-Making and Power: Finding the Optimal Mix

Like others, we celebrate diversity and believe that including many different actors creates coalitional strength. However, organizations can also be so different that collaboration can begin to feel forced and false. Within collaboratives, it may be more important to have a single lead with broad legitimacy, rather than always relying on democratic processes. On the other hand, power differences within a collaborative can create tensions. On the foundation side, it is often good for foundations to push the envelope to jump-start collaborations and draw new connections between issues. However, processes of foundation directives and technical assistance that are "top-down" can also strain relations—striking the right balance of collaboration with the grantees is itself a challenge.

Conflict and Cooperation: Accepting Tensions, Push-Back, and Growth

For lasting quality relationships, collaborative partners must be willing to invest time and energy in the initiative. If these relationships are meaningful, they will inevitably involve some level of tension, and thus groups should learn to become comfortable with at least some level of conflict. Conflict, in short, can be a healthy part of long term collaborative organizing and advocacy efforts rather than a sign of dysfunction. Indeed, a certain level of tension and conflict is expected to emerge internally within the collaboratives, externally in policy circles with other agencies and leaders, and also with the funders pushing the plan.

Mission Shift and Mission Drift: Making the Best of Changes to the Plan

Organizations are more likely to stay in a collaborative if it is consistent with their long-term mission—and they are more likely to be authentic in that collaborative if their participation is driven by that mission and not simply access to resources. At the same time, as times change so do missions. The challenge lies in implementing change that reflects valuable learning in the context of a strategic direction, rather than simply changing in response to external pressures, particularly from funders. Ultimately, the success of the collaboratives in promoting meaningful mission "shift" rather than mission "drift" lies in their ability to "push-back"—to engage with foundations in a way that

both sides learn from each others perspectives and find meaningful ways of moving forward.

Work and Focus: Finding Strategies That Bond and That Matter

Collaboratives seem to work best when there is a concrete project to work on, and the focus is on getting the work done rather than on simply building a collaborative. This means, however, that groups also have to know *what* works to achieve desired outcomes. Having a toolkit of ready strategies is important—technical assistance should be as much about appropriate approaches as it is about organizational capacity in order to build effective collaboration. Shifting from service work to policy advocacy and organizing, or vice versa, is particularly difficult and rather than combining both in every single organization, it may be best to let each group of the collaborative play the part that suits it best.

Monitoring and Evaluating: Honoring the Process and Allowing for Chance

Funders require reports and results, and rightfully so. In terms of collaboration, however, unintended consequences produce the most interesting and the most fruitful outcomes. It is also generally difficult to measure all the impacts of collaboration, some of which may be outside the original plan. For example, partnerships between particular organizations within broader collaboratives may be as important as the strength of the whole; similarly connections

made with organizations outside the collaborative can lead to unexpected valuable opportunities.

Getting There: Roadmap, Methods and Caveats

To set the stage for these findings, we begin in this chapter with a brief overview of the origins of the initiative, including its initial design. In the next two chapters, we discuss the economic and policy landscape of the regions where the collaboratives were formed, focusing especially on the constraints to collaboration presented by regional politics, economic realities and neighborhood dynamics. Those readers already familiar with the socioeconomic and political contexts of the regions might want to skip forward; we stress, however, that regional context matters for regional initiatives, a point to which we return in the conclusion.

In Chapter 4, we offer a more detailed profile of the organizations involved in the CWBH, pointing out similarities and differences with regard to visions of social change, relative capacity and other factors that had an impact on collaboration. In Chapter 5, we examine processes of collaboration itself, highlighting different models and tensions that emerged along the way. We conclude in Chapters 6 and 7 with a synthesis of lessons learned from the initiative thus far, and some thoughts on implications for funding of collaboratives in the future.

In conducting the analysis for this report, we were advantaged by our long association with both the overall project and various groups within it. However, for this particular project, we also reviewed key documents, generated new data on the regional economies and neighborhoods, visited each region and talked to key personnel in each organization using a standardized interview protocol, and supplemented this with semi-structured interviews with others who had been involved in the CWBH process. We then processed the materials in several team settings and shared the findings with key personnel in the foundation and in each region before completing a final draft of this report.

Before we proceed, a few caveats are in order. First, this is not a formal evaluation but rather a qualitative assessment aimed at drawing out themes and lessons for funders, community groups and others. This is partly by choice: we have decided that our unique value-added is in the delivery of a "real-time" report that is readable, accessible, and can inform a field and practitioners that are themselves in rapid motion. It is also partly by necessity: while we have been tracking the initiatives informally for several years, the constraints of time and money in this particular contract did not permit us to gather a significant amount of data for this report. While we are reasonably confident about the conclusions we draw, partly because they square with other findings in the literature, we also recognize their tentative nature and welcome a dialogue with the CWBH organizations and others in the field.

Second, while we utilize our knowledge of the long history of CWBH in developing our understanding of collaboration, our attention is primarily focused on the last two years (2005-2007) of the work. This is also partly by necessity—our contract is specifically focused on the latter period. However, in order to contextualize collaboration in the recent period, it is often necessary to refer to events that occurred in an earlier era. This is important in most arenas of research but particularly important when discussing this particular issue: collaborations rely on trust, trust is built or eroded over time, and history therefore matters greatly.

Third, while it is itself an important story of collaboration, we do not provide a full picture of the relationship between the two key funders in this initiative, The Endowment and the Rockefeller Foundation. The relationship between the two foundations is an interesting topic in its own right and one worthy of a separate paper, particularly given that philanthropic partnerships have themselves been gaining ground and many foundation leaders are looking for a summary of "best" (and "worst") practices. This, however, would have required a different set of interviews with foundation leadership; instead, we focused on the ways in which the

foundation partnership did or did not impact collaboration by the regional groups.

Fourth, while the initiative is spearheaded by a health based foundation, the report is not about "traditional" health issues such as access to insurance or quality medical facilities. Rather this report reflects the focus of the The Endowment on community health, including quality of life factors such as securing and maintaining employment.

And finally, a word of appreciation: None of the research that was conducted for this report would have been possible without the thoughtful responsiveness of the grantees and foundation leadership, who offered their candid insights and experience, and demonstrated their true commitment to reducing disparities in their regions. We thank them for their

cooperation in this project, but mostly we thank them for their efforts to make economic opportunity and better health a reality for all the residents in their regions.

Starting and Managing the Initiative

> **Collaboration:** *A joint effort between or among two or more organizations. Collaborative partners must share in funding, activities, responsibilities and/or contribute information and technical resources.*
>
> – The California Endowment
> *(website)*

As the timeline below indicates (see **Figure 1.1**), the seeds of CWBH were initially planted in 1997, when the Rockefeller Foundation and The Endowment began conceptualizing the initiative and conducting background

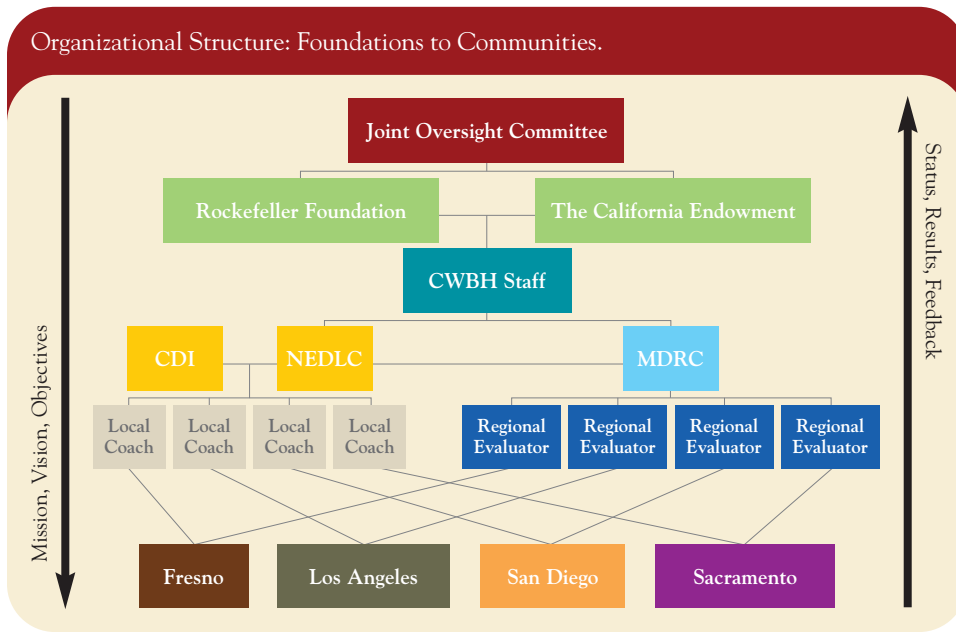| FIGURE 1.1		CWBH Timeline as of July 2007.		
	OVERALL	**Grantee Changes**	**Key Changes**	**Initiative Primary Focus**
1997 to 2000	**Conceptualization and Research Initiative Launch**			
2001	**Phase I**		Coaches hired by NEDLC	Planning, Community and organizational capacity building
2002		Catholic Charities of Fresno leaves initiative	Rockefeller transfers its funding to The Endowment	
2003				
2004	**Phase II**	EHC, SDOP, SVOC leave initiative. CPI joins SDWBH	Coordinators hired by collaboratives	Implementation: Accessing & creating more and better jobs
2005				
2006				
2007	**Epilogue Phase**			Policy: Regional interventions
2008				

research to help them target their investments. Known then as the *Strategic Alliance: The California Endowment and Rockefeller Foundation Employment and Health Program* (the Alliance), the underlying model of the initiative suggested that improving work opportunities could impact health disparities, that regions were the right scale for such labor market interventions, and that community collaboratives combining advocacy and service delivery were the appropriate vehicle for designing, legislating and implementing these interventions.

The first step, however, was selecting both the regions and the organizations. To do this, the foundations worked with researchers and consultants to select four California regions and a number of groups within those regions. Of the six regions originally considered, four were selected, with an eye toward both receptivity (the region was conducive to change) and geographic diversity, as the foundations were especially interested in funding a mix of both metropolitan and more rural areas of the state. Receptivity, key to understanding the likelihood of success for the Community-based organization (CBO) collaboratives, was determined by looking at several conditions: (1) economic drivers that were potentially connected to lower-income workers, (2) labor markets where there were opportunities for policy interventions to pursue labor upgrading, and (3) and the institutional landscape (or social ecology) such that a well-organized

CBO collaborative could engage with and influence the appropriate regional institutions.

With the four regions identified, the foundations went on to canvass and select organizations within each region to fund. In determining organizations, we looked for groups that were working in specific neighborhoods (chosen based on socioeconomic factors). Grantees were selected in each region based on criteria that looked at the strength of the community base, diversity, and the collective capacity in employment, health, policy analysis and community organizing. In choosing the groups, the funders sought to bring together place-based work with the multicultural makeup of the region, paying especially close attention to a racially diverse mixture of organizations.

The initiative was formally launched in 2000 with the structure diagramed on page 21. Each region was provided with a coach to facilitate the collaborative's work and serve as a resource. The coach's role later transitioned into a coordinator position, with coordinators eventually hired directly by the collaboratives themselves. Communication between the foundation leadership and grantees varied, with some lines of communication funneled through the coordinators and others through more direct connections. In addition to these regional coordinators, the Alliance project involved capacity-building for CBOs, paying special attention to developing

Organizational Structure: Foundations to Communities.

Mission, Vision, Objectives →

Status, Results, Feedback →

Joint Oversight Committee
- Rockefeller Foundation
- The California Endowment

CWBH Staff

CDI · NEDLC · MDRC

Local Coach · Local Coach · Local Coach · Local Coach · Regional Evaluator · Regional Evaluator · Regional Evaluator · Regional Evaluator

Fresno · Los Angeles · San Diego · Sacramento

their ability to analyze and intervene in the regional economy. To facilitate this, the Alliance initially chose both the National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC) and the National Community Development Institute (NCDI) to provide technical assistance to grantee organizations. MDRC was selected as the formal evaluator of the initiative, tasked with working with local grantees to develop effective data gathering systems and provide overall evaluation of the initiative's impact.

The technical assistance providers, the organizations, and even the foundation relationships changed over time. While both The Endowment and Rockefeller initially saw CWBH as the start of a ten year project, in 2002 the Rockefeller Foundation transferred funding and management of the

initiative to The Endowment. Several factors led to this shift but since Rockefeller transferred all committed funds to The Endowment, and entrusting it to carry forward the initiative goals, there were less differences than might be expected from the view of grantees. However, the change did mean that the funding commitment was first shortened to seven years and later extended by The Endowment for another year; for a total of eight years; ending in 2008—the final or "epilogue" phase was a somewhat unexpected extension of the initiative. Like many long term initiatives, the actual evolution of the initiative (reflected in **Figure 1.2**) differed somewhat from the original process envisioned by the foundations.

Foundation management and assessment of the overall initiative was not a simple task: the underlying theories of the
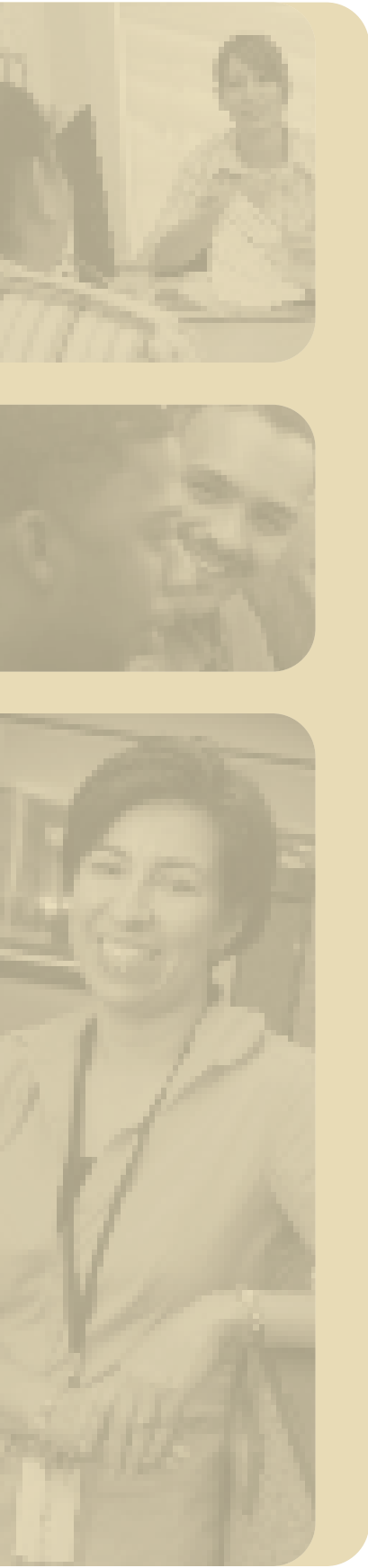
FIGURE 1.2 CWBH Strategic Change Framework.

NOV. 2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Starting Point 2000-2001 • CBOs with Policy Capacity & Related Activity • General Program Conception									
	Early Intervention 2001-2003 • Collaborative Building & Consensus Building • Develop TOC Info/Resource for Strategy • Pilot Projects & Strategic Plans								
		Early/Short-Term Outcomes 2002-2004 • Improved Policy Environment • Informed, Organized & Engaged Communities • Regional Infrastructures							
			Immediate Outcomes *(Prerequisites to LTO)* – 2003-2008 • Effective Workforce Development & Social Service/Support System • Stronger Employer Links & Workforce Development Networks (Public/Private Partnerships)						
				Long-Term Outcomes – 2005-2009+ • Better Quality Jobs → **Better Individual Health** • Higher Employment Levels • Sustained Community Capacities & Policy Influence → **Healthier Communities**					

initiative were complicated and there were various layers to the initiative's structure, each with its own set of actors. Grantees did perceive issues of longer-term inconsistency in their communications from the foundation(s), particularly relating to changing emphasis on different elements within the theory of change. Broadly speaking, the focus of the initiative moved from being policy centered, to being more employment-based, and finally, on to a more campaign-based model that also returned to include

policy in the later years. Such changes were perhaps inevitable, with the changes in the foundations themselves and efforts to refine the theory of change based on the experience of actually implementing the initiative. The changes in emphasis required adjustments in work plans and goals, and increases in grantees' reporting requirements. As a result, many grantees became confused about these changing expectations. In the words of one grantee: "The foundations threw us a curve ball."

There were also changes over time in the evaluation process of the initiative, which led to some frustration on the part of grantees. Any social change model presents problems for measuring outcomes: what may be easy to measure may be less important; what may be important may be less easy to measure. After the planning phase, pressures to achieve job placement goals were evident as groups needed to implement their plans. While quantitative tools were established, few groups wanted to track numbers alone; they thought that developing an understanding of what it takes to translate policy into programs and outcomes was important but that the results of developing this understanding were not easily captured. Qualitative data was therefore included in the assessments to help enrich the picture of the grantees' accomplishments and challenges. Some grantees reported frustration with the reporting, suggesting that the data requirements were "cumbersome" and that there was not a quick turnaround in having the data reported back to them to make corrections in programming.

With programming changes, it was several years into the initiative before some of the community-based organizations formalized their Neighborhood Employment Resource Centers (NERCs), a key component of the initiative designed to provide comprehensive employment support. The NERCs sometimes fit easily into the organization's existing structure, particularly those that already had experience in job placement, but in other cases the NERC was less central to the organization's mission or focus (for those more policy- or organizing-focused). In the more recent shift back to policy, there have been particular challenges with incorporating organizing into service delivery.

Technical assistance (TA) also changed over the life of the initiative. In the early years technical assistance was a significant component of the initiative, with the foundations providing resources to NEDLC and NCDI to work with local groups. Interestingly, like with the collaboratives, the marriage of TA providers was also arranged: the foundations liked both organizations and wanted to encourage them to work together. Little time was allocated, however, for this collaboration to get going and consequently was reflected in a rocky start and a rockier next year. The TA collaboration eventually found its way but the beginnings were difficult, with differences in the speed with which the two TA providers got into the field to do assessment, confusions about whether the lead status of NEDLC as the fiscal agent also reflected a lead status in the work of the partnership, and some tensions around resource allocation and work styles.[2] However, shifts in technical assistance levels and entities mattered less to grantees than the overall timing and top-down assignment of such assistance, an issue we explore more closely in Chapter 6.

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[2] It should be noted that NCDI left the initiative after the first three years, primarily because their contract was not renewed.

Who's Collaborating?

A snapshot of the organizations in each region's collaborative at the writing of this report is organized in **Table 1.1**. The range of organizations includes community development corporations, social service centers, intermediaries and community organizers. The oldest organization of the group, Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee on Anti-Poverty in San Diego (MAAC), was founded in 1965, and the newest organization, Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development (FWCED), was founded in early 2000 with a great deal of their initial support coming from the CWBH initiative.

The grantees also shifted over time. One grantee in Fresno, Catholic Charities, dropped out of the initiative early in the process. Phase II, from 2004 through 2006, focused on implementation, specifically focusing on job access and job creation plans that were developed in the initial phase. During this shift to implementation, the Sacramento collaborative lost one grantee (Sacramento Valley Organizing Coalition), and San Diego lost two grantees (the Environmental Health Coalition and San Diego Organizing Project) and gained Center for Policy Initiatives (CPI) as a new grantee.[3] Some of the groups selected for funding

were highly sophisticated and experienced; others were less established, including some that did not yet have official non-profit status and thus needed to receive their funds through an intermediary or another collaborative partner. In some cases, in particular with those less established groups, the CWBH funding was a large portion of the organization's total funding, as much as one third or more. On the one hand, this presented a great opportunity for several of the nascent organizations to build their capacity and learn from their more experienced partners. On the other, it created potential issues of power inequality that we explore later.

The primary geography of the organizations also varies as some consider themselves to be working at a large scale (such as SCOPE and CPI, which seek to cover low-income or working people in their entire metro areas, or One by One, which seeks to represent all residents of Fresno), while others identify themselves as neighborhood-level organizations (for example, the East L.A. Community Corporation and the Mutual Assistance Network in Sacramento) or in service of specific communities across a region (as with UAAMAC in San Diego and the Fresno Center for New Americans).

[3] In Sacramento, the Sacramento Valley Organizing Coalition was originally part of SWBH but separated from the initiative at the end of the first 2-year planning phase, primarily as a result of internal dynamics within SVOC that are briefly discussed later in the report. In San Diego, the collaborative originally included the Environmental Health Collaborative (EHC) and the San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP) but both organizations and the foundation agreed to separate in the start of the implementation phase—and CPI stepped in to play a leadership role; coincidently but unrelated to this shift *per se*, ECH and CPI experienced a rift due to different approaches around the negotiation of a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA), which was one of the major accomplishments of SDWBH in recent years. [Technically, Community Partners was also a partner in LAWBH but this is an artifact as its role was simply as the fiscal organization for Alameda Corridor Jobs Coalition (ACJC)]. Catholic Charities in Fresno left the collaborative due to issues internal to the organization.

The number of organizations in the collaboratives range from five in Los Angeles to two in Sacramento. The organizations are quite different in their relative experience and strength, and in their history of working together prior to the collaborations arranged by the CWBH process. While we explore these differences more below, Sacramento is a relatively even match between partners (albeit with different areas of expertise) who had substantial contact prior to working together in CWBH. In Fresno, there was an uneven level of capacity at the beginning of the collaborative but that has changed as two of the organizations have come up in their abilities; the coming together there has been all the more remarkable because there was little history of prior collaboration with each other.

In San Diego, CPI is very much a dominant player in the current arrangement; MAAC is also large and had a lead role earlier but its housing focus and relatively new shift to organizing leads it to be less suited than CPI for the current collective efforts to promote Community Benefits Agreements; meanwhile, UAAMAC has been struggling all along to establish itself through multiple leadership transitions. For all these groups, working together is a very new phenomenon.

Finally, in Los Angeles, SCOPE and CoCo are more powerful and long-lived organizations in terms of advocacy and enjoy a deep history of collaboration. ELACC is a newer effort, Chinatown Services Center is older (but with less history working with the other groups in the collaborative), and the Alameda Corridor Jobs Coalition, which was extraordinarily effective during the construction of the Corridor itself, has been less effective at sustaining its work in other areas. ACJC, already a small organization, experienced capacity issues when asked do training in two industries and negotiate other workforce related support.

Notably, the initiative design did not necessarily seek out groups that were already in partnership; rather, the design put together combinations of groups that were thought to have potential mutual interest and could thus join forces to make change. While grantees were honored to be selected, some of them asked, "why us?" Regardless of their reactions, the groups entered a journey together that would eventually lead them to common destinations.
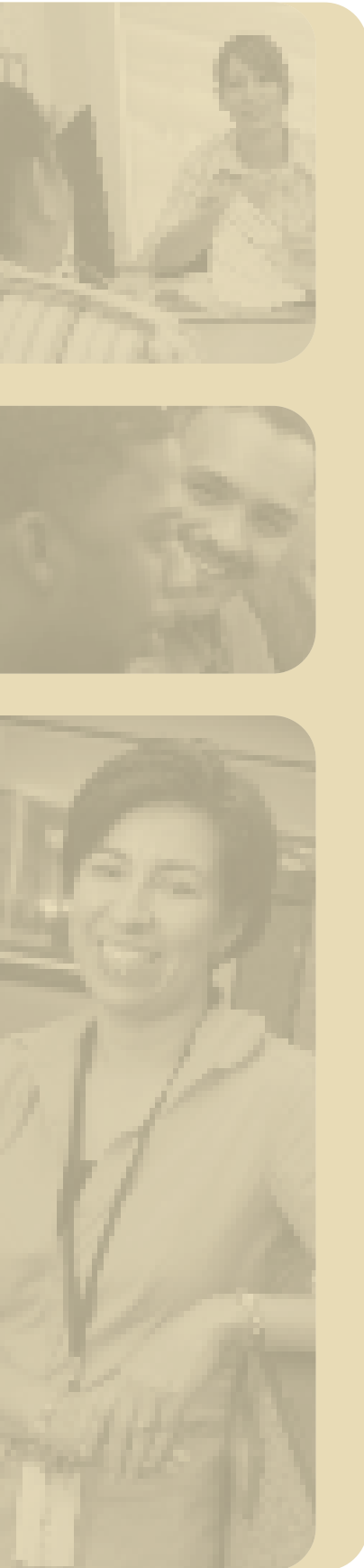
TABLE 1.1   California Works for Better Health Collaboratives.

	Organization	Year Founded	Type of Organization	Primary Geography	Main Constituency
Fresno Works for Better Health (FWBH)	Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development (FWCED)	Early 2000s	Community development corporation	Southwest Fresno	African-American and Latino residents of Southwest Fresno
	Fresno Center for New Americans	1991	Multidimensional social services	Fresno County; located in West Fresno	Southeast Asian residents of Fresno
	One by One Leadership	1994	Faith-based organization for urban leadership	City of Fresno	Residents of the Fresno region
Los Angeles Works for Better Health (LAWBH)	Alameda Corridor Jobs Coalition (ACJC)	1998	Coalition for jobs, training and benefits	Alameda Corridor	Low-income workers in the Alameda Corridor area
	Strategic Concepts in Policy and Education (SCOPE)	1992	Community organizing, research and policy analysis	East LA, Chinatown and South LA	Low-income communities of color across Los Angeles
	East L.A. Community Corporation (ELACC)	1996	Community development corporation	Boyle Heights, East L.A.	Low-income residents of Boyle Heights
	Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (CoCo)	1990	Community organizing for policy change	South L.A.	African-American and Latino residents in South LA
	Chinatown Service Center	1975	Community service and development organization	Los Angeles County	Chinese American immigrants and refugees
Sacramento Works for Better Health (SWBH)	Mutual Assistance Network of Del Paso Heights (MAN)	1992	Neighborhood center	Del Paso Heights neighborhood	Low-income white, African-American and Asian population
	Asian Resources	1980	Social services	Sacramento region	Low-income Asians and Asian immigrants
San Diego Works for Better Health (SDWBH)	Center on Policy Initiatives (CPI)	1997	Research, policy and advocacy	San Diego region	Working people in San Diego
	United African American Ministerial Action Council (UAAMAC)	1994	Faith-based network	San Diego region	Low-income African Americans
	Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee on Anti-Poverty (MAAC)	1965	Social services, community development	Barrio Logan and Sherman Heights neighborhoods	Low- and moderate-income families

None of the research that was conducted for this report would have been possible without the thoughtful responsiveness of the grantees and foundation leadership, who offered their candid insights, experience, and demonstrated their true commitment to reducing disparities in their regions.

Economic Context and Landscape

Collaboratives do not take place in a vacuum— they are launched with real organizations with real histories and in real places.

Taking into account both the larger regional context and the specifics of the neighborhoods and constituencies organizations represent is critical to understanding the potential for collaboration. Aligning the design and management of the CWBH with regional and neighborhood contexts in which the collaborative functions presented challenges and set the backdrop for how collaboratives ultimately worked together.

Even with sustained funding, the collaboratives we examine here faced the sort of challenges that face most collaboratives, especially what Takahashi and Smutny (2001) characterize as "turbulence" at three scales: contextual, institutional and individual. At the contextual level, "turbulence" refers to the dynamics of economic, political and demographic context in which collaboratives exist, and to which they must respond individually and collectively.

CWBH, for example, operates in four different metropolitan regions and each of these regions is different in terms of its economy and political dynamics. A sagging economy, as in San Diego in recent years, can make business less open to community entreaties for more jobs, and the frustrations that this can produce can impact community-based collaborations. A long-dormant economy, as in Fresno, might lead business to be open to any effort to make the region competitive and this may open new doors to community leaders that reinforce the potential power of collaboration and speaking with a single voice. A progressive political environment, as in Los Angeles, can create real and significant opportunities that lead some groups to move faster than others to fill the void, with tensions developing around strategy and speed. A less amenable political environment, as in Sacramento, can lead organizations to hunker down in their local work where results are easier to both achieve and identify.

In this chapter, we focus our attention on understanding the contextual turbulence, specifically the economic context of the region and the neighborhoods. In the subsequent chapter, we present the landscape of community, labor and business within regions and neighborhoods as well as shifts in politics and policy that have shaped collaborative work.

Demographics of the Regions

Some of the basic demographic and economic characteristics of the four counties in which CWBH is active, with data for both 2000 and 2005, are outlined in **Table 2.1**. While the CWBH groups work at a regional level that sometimes does not match county boundaries, we include this table to allow for some basic comparisons between the core county of each region, which is representative of the region as a whole.

Of the four counties, Fresno has the lowest income levels, highest poverty rates and lowest education levels, while San Diego generally occupies the other extreme. It has a median household income that was roughly fifty percent more than that of Fresno in 2000, a poverty rate that is about half that of

TABLE 2.1   County Characteristics, 2000 and 2005.

	FRESNO 2000	FRESNO 2005	LOS ANGELES 2000	LOS ANGELES 2005	SACRAMENTO 2000	SACRAMENTO 2005	SAN DIEGO 2000	SAN DIEGO 2005
Demographics (%)								
White	39.6	36.9	30.9	29	57.7	53	54.9	51.6
Latino	44.1	47.1	44.6	47.3	16	18.8	26.7	29.9
Black	5	5	9.4	8.6	9.5	9.9	5.4	4.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.9	9.1	12.1	13.1	11.3	14.1	9.2	10.6
Other	3.5	2	3	1.9	5.5	4.2	3.8	3
Pop. over 18 years	68	68.6	72.1	72	72.5	72.2	74.4	73.2
Foreign-born	21.1	22.6	36.2	36	16.1	20	21.5	23.4
Arrived pre-1980	5.6	5.4	11.1	9.5	4.3	4.1	7.1	6.6
Arrived during the 1980s	7.1	6.5	12.5	10.6	4.7	4.5	6.8	6
Arrived during the 1990s	8.4	6.9	12.6	10.2	7.1	6.4	7.7	6.5
Arrived 2000 or later	–	3.9	–	5.7	–	5.1	–	4.2
Education (%)								
Less than high school	32.5	28.6	30.1	25.6	16.7	14.9	17.4	15.3
High school graduate	21.1	22.1	18.8	21.8	22.9	22.6	19.9	20
Some college	28.9	29.6	26.2	25	35.6	34.4	33.2	30.8
B.A. and above	17.5	19.7	24.9	27.6	24.8	28.1	29.5	34
Economic Characteristics (%)								
Median household income	$41,746	$41,899	$51,265	$48,248	$52,675	$51,793	$60,087	$56,335
Poverty rate	22.9	20.7	17.9	16.3	14.1	13.6	12.4	11
150% poverty rate	37.1	33.4	29.9	28.3	23.3	21.9	21.8	19.4
200% poverty rate	48.3	44.4	39.9	38.6	31.9	31.1	30.6	29.1

Source: Census 2000 and 2005 American Community Survey, accessed using American Factfinder. Notes: 1) All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above). 2) Median household income figures in the "2000" columns are actually from 1999, and all figures are in 2005 dollars. 3) 2000 data on the percentage of total population that is foreign born and arrived during the 1990s includes those who arrived in the U.S. through March 2000. 4) Education information is restricted to population 25 years and over.

Fresno, and a percentage of the population over 25 years with a B.A. or higher level of education that is nearly double that of Fresno in either year shown. Interestingly, while San Diego is the furthest ahead economically among the counties, it saw a significant decline in household income between 2000 and 2005, falling far short of the slight increase in Fresno, significantly outpacing the decline in Sacramento and eclipsing the slip in Los Angeles. The San Diego decline was perhaps to be expected: like Silicon Valley, which saw a very large fall in income and employment in the early 2000's, San Diego has a more important high-technology and science sector that was vulnerable to the slowdown in investment spending that drove California's last recession.

While Los Angeles and Sacramento have similar median household incomes, comparisons of the poverty rates offer more insight into the comparative rankings of the regions. Note that the alphabetical ordering also reflects the poverty ordering: Fresno is poorer than Los Angeles, which is poorer than Sacramento, which is poorer than San Diego. Interestingly, all four counties saw a decrease in their poverty rates, even when we use the more reasonable standard of 150 or 200 percent of the federal poverty level (the latter is about $38,700 for a family of four in 2005). This occurred even though median income was falling in all counties. While this would seem to be a good sign for the poor, it is also evidence of a

pressed middle class and the potential for insecurity in local politics and frugality in local fiscal decisions.

On the education side, Fresno clearly has the lowest education levels, which undoubtedly helps explain why businesses there are particularly interested in human capital development. Although Los Angeles is similar to Sacramento and San Diego in terms of the share of the working age population holding a B.A. or higher level of education in 2005 (at around 28 percent, 28 percent and 34 percent, respectively), a full quarter of the Los Angeles adult population held less than a high school diploma in 2005.

As for demographics, Los Angeles is the most racially diverse with the lowest percentage of non-Hispanic white residents, the highest percentage of Latinos, and relatively high percentages of African Americans and Asian/Pacific Islanders. However, all four counties became more diverse over the five year period considered, with significant decreases in the share of non-Hispanic white and increases in the share of Latino and Asian/Pacific Islander. In terms of particular racial/ethnic groups, Fresno and Los Angeles are home to the highest concentration of Latinos at 47 percent each in 2005, but the Latino population in Fresno seems to have a lower level of political voice than in Los Angeles (where the mayor of the central city is Latino). Sacramento and San Diego are very white, even by California
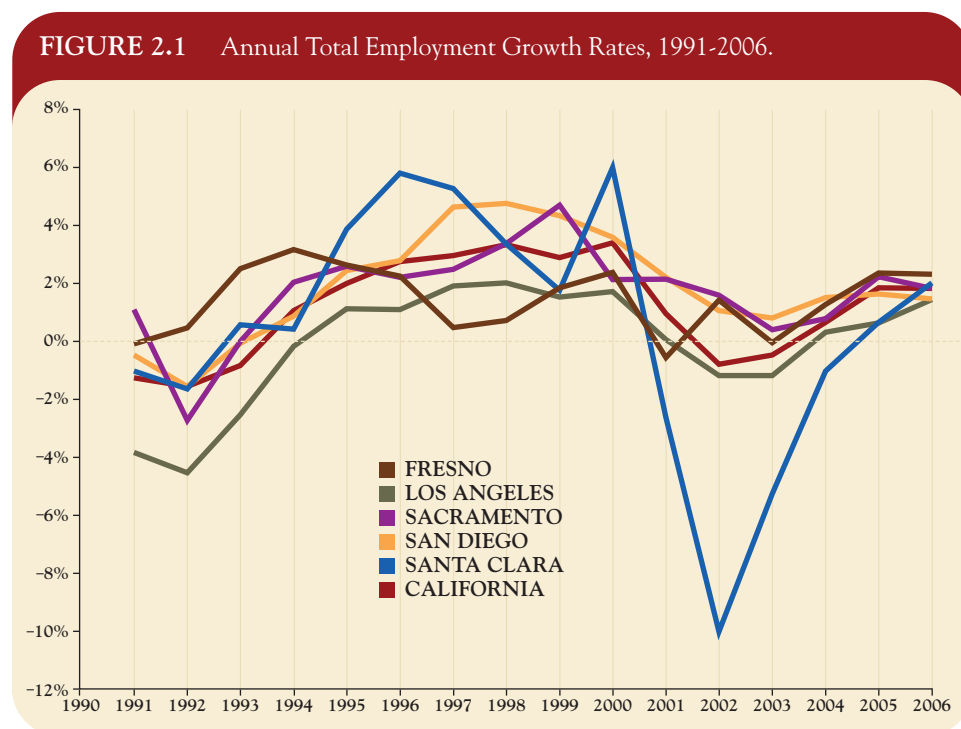
standards, and this makes it more necessary to frame political change in terms that will appeal to Anglo voters and decision makers; this is not as big a concern in, say, Los Angeles. Finally, immigration is important in all areas but the percent of foreign-born is highest in Los Angeles, as is the percent of more recent migrants.

Within the minority populations, it is interesting to note that Sacramento's non-white population is the most evenly distributed across racial/ethnic groups, suggesting a particular need for inter-ethnic coalitions of minority groups to identify common interests (which is reflected in the collaborative there). In Los Angeles and Fresno, Latinos are by far the largest ethnic group amongst so-called minorities—but this has different

salience with Latino power seemingly more on the ascendance in Los Angeles than in Fresno. Finally, there was little shift in the concentration of African Americans over the five year period across the counties, with all counties seeing either a slight decrease or no change. Sacramento stands out as being the only county where there was a slight increase, surpassing Los Angeles County in its share African Americans—an area that has long been thought of as key to Californias' African Americans and the state's black political voice.

Nature of the Regional Economy

Each of these regions and hence their collaboratives face unique challenges and opportunities due to the nature of their regional economy. **Figure 2.1**

FIGURE 2.1   Annual Total Employment Growth Rates, 1991-2006.

Legend:
- FRESNO
- LOS ANGELES
- SACRAMENTO
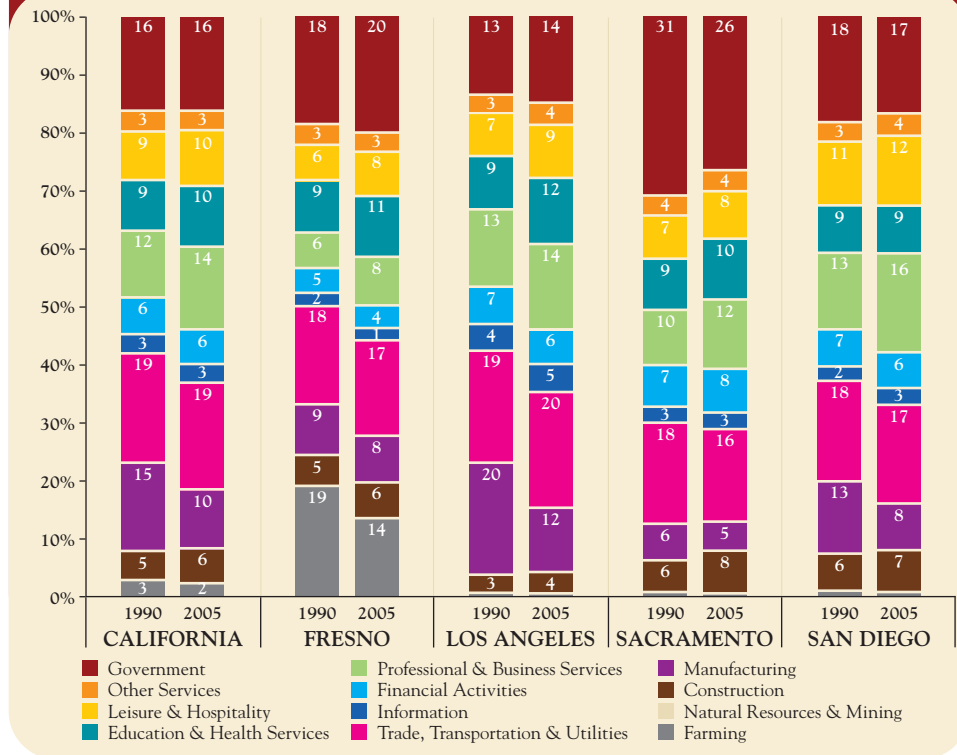- SAN DIEGO
- SANTA CLARA
- CALIFORNIA

shows rates of employment change in each of the four regions, along with California state-wide figures and Santa Clara County, the core of the Silicon Valley. We include that here in order to illustrate that much of the overall California recession following 2001 was actually driven by the Silicon Valley and its employment downsizing in the wake of the dot-com implosion. Thus, while Los Angeles had been the real driver in the recession of the early 1990s (see the negative growth 1991-1993), the region was actually moderately resilient in this last recession. In general, all the CWBH regions had more stable employment growth than Silicon Valley in the last eight years, and this has probably created more favorable conditions for employment programming.

Figure 2.2 includes the percentages of workers per industry for each CWBH county for both 1990 and 2005; we also include California as a whole by way of comparison. As can be seen, Fresno has a much higher reliance on farming employment despite its decline from 19 percent of total employment to 14 percent over the fifteen year period. Los Angeles saw a massive decrease in manufacturing as a share, going from 20 percent in 1990 to 12 percent in 2005; the replacement work came in various service sectors but in incremental ways. Sacramento had very stable employment,

FIGURE 2.2 Employment by Industry for California, CWBH Counties.

Legend:
- Government
- Other Services
- Leisure & Hospitality
- Education & Health Services
- Professional & Business Services
- Financial Activities
- Information
- Trade, Transportation & Utilities
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Natural Resources & Mining
- Farming

Source: California Employment Development Department (EDD), Labor Market Info Data Library (LMID).

with a very large share of government employment, albeit smaller in 2005. San Diego saw its relative gains in information (which includes the publishing and internet industries) and in professional business services, which include software programming and science-related fields.

Table 2.2 picks up the analysis with a more detailed breakdown of employment growth. There, the interesting trends include the following:

- While Fresno is reliant on agriculture, farming employment has actually shrunk over the period. This has given businesses reasons to look elsewhere for economic growth, and this has created reasons for the FWBH collaborative to engage with business as they search for a new model.
- Construction growth was strong everywhere but Los Angeles. Los Angeles, however, is now in the midst of a building boom, both infill development and

downtown redevelopment. The latter has created conditions for Community Benefits Agreements, something of interest to the collaborative groups.

In general, all the CWBH regions had more stable employment growth than Silicon Valley in the last eight years, and this has probably created more favorable conditions for employment programming.

- The information industry—and presumably its internet spillovers— grew most strongly in San Diego over the period.
- Health and education services grew strongly in virtually all the regions, suggesting these are important industries for job creation and placement.

TABLE 2.2	Percent change in Number of Workers by Industry, 1990-2005.					
	CALIF.	FRESNO	LOS ANGELES	SACRAMENTO	SAN DIEGO	SANTA CLARA
Farming	4	–12	–46	–21	–1	–22
Natural Resources & Mining	–35	–71	–55	–33	–33	–33
Construction	40	47	2	57	51	49
Manufacturing	–23	12	–42	17	–15	–34
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	17	18	0	15	28	2
Information	21	–2	11	20	72	64
Financial Activities	13	17	–13	39	27	9
Professional & Business Services	43	71	6	63	70	48
Education & Health Services	42	47	23	51	46	34
Leisure & Hospitality	33	48	23	44	43	23
Other Services	21	16	6	27	44	8
Government	16	32	8	9	21	3

Source: California Employment Development Department (EDD), Labor Market Info Data Library (LMID).
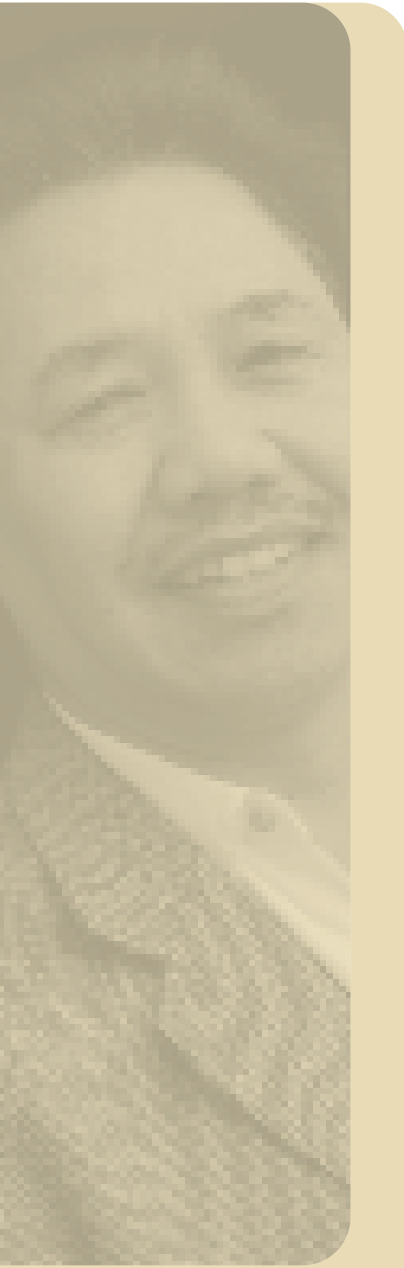
Another way in which labor market conditions impact collaboration is simply through unemployment. Where labor demand is brisk, community-based organizations can exercise more leverage. In **Figure 2.3**, we depict the behavior of unemployment rates across the different regions. There are several observations worth noting:

- Unemployment rates were substantially lower in 2006, and have been declining since 2003. Such labor market tightening usually makes it easier to do job placements and to move policy in pro-community directions, suggesting more favorable conditions for collaboratives (these, of course, could be reversed by less favorable political conditions, as in San Diego).

- As suggested above, the Los Angeles labor market consistently underperformed through the 1990s,

that is, it had significantly higher unemployment rates. Since 2000, however, the Los Angeles labor market generally did much better than Silicon Valley (see **Figure 2.1**) and closed the gap with San Diego and Sacramento, a sign of more favorable economic conditions.

- Fresno has seen a significant closing of the gap in unemployment with the rest of the state. While this is still a poor area, tightening labor markets, particularly in the face of the slowly shrinking farming sector, suggest potential wage pressures and, once again, an opportunity to engage business in training strategies that can develop the workforce. While not depicted in these annual data, it is also important to note that unemployment in Fresno has greater seasonal fluctuations than the other regions, with unemployment dropping

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FIGURE 2.3   Unemployment, 1990-2006.
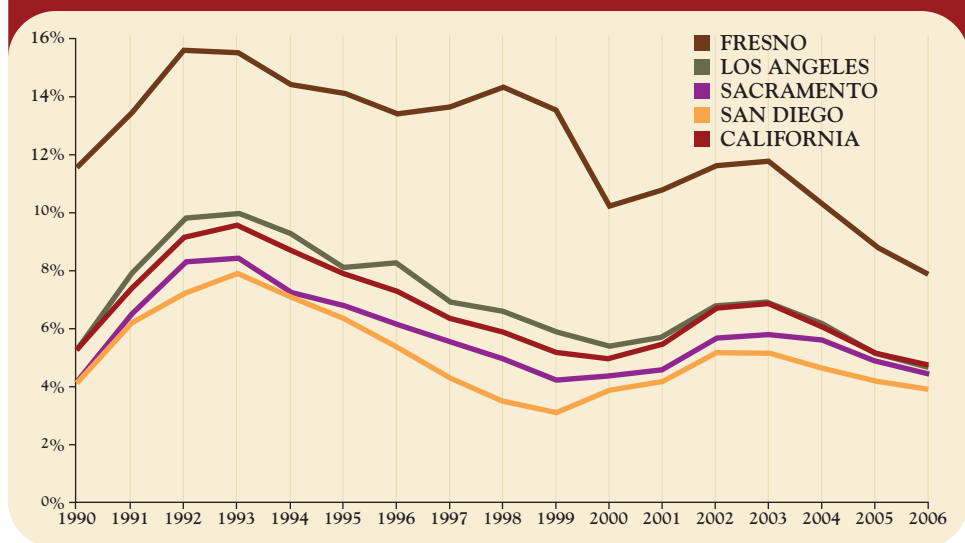
during the summer planting and harvest seasons to near state averages.

Of course, it is not enough to simply get a job—one hopes that the job is full-time, pays benefits and provides a future. While calculating the requirements for that is beyond the reach of this paper, **Table 2.3** at least provides some data on the degree of underemployment as measured by those who are not working fulltime. We also provide there a measure of those "not in the labor force"—these are often those discouraged workers who have given up looking and no longer listed as unemployed because they are not actively seeking employment. While the rate of underemployment is similar between regions, it is striking that the "not in labor force" numbers are highest in Fresno and lowest in San Diego, a trend that suggests that the former region may have more "hard-to-place" job seekers.

While economic conditions may matter the impact is not unidirectional: collaboratives can make policy progress even in the face of an adverse economy and a favorable economy does not necessarily make collaboration easier. And what is favorable in a general sense—restored growth—does not always translate into better opportunities. In Los Angeles, for example, there is debate over whether the city's focus on retail and residential development is best for the regional economy as a whole and for job creation. Organizers point out that the conversion of manufacturing land to residential lots—which was sanctioned by the City—drives up real estate prices and destroys the last remaining manufacturing jobs in the region. Real estate prices are of concern because Los Angeles has a lack of affordable housing and low home ownership rates. Some organizations believe that the city's focus on commercial retail development is not conducive to the creation of good jobs—a critical component for the success of the employment work the collaboratives were instructed to take on.

Still, the broad economic conditions do matter—the lower unemployment rate in Fresno in recent years, for example, has facilitated the collaboration between

TABLE 2.3 — Percent Employment and Underemployment, 2005.

	CA.	FRESNO	LOS ANGELES	SACRAMENTO	SAN DIEGO
Not in labor force	24	26	24	23	22
Unemployed	4	5	5	4	4
Underemployed (up to and including four days/week)	17	17	16	17	16
Employed (more than four days/week)	55	52	55	55	58

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations.
Notes: Assumes 8 hour work days and 52 work weeks per year; figures are restricted to persons ages 25-64 not living in group quarters.

FWBH and the Regional Jobs Initiative, a more business-oriented venture seeking to help firms meet labor shortages in particular, more highly skilled occupations. And another Los Angeles organizer noted how regional employment prospects impacted the success of their work in placing harder-to-serve populations: "In 2003, there was a downturn in the [entertainment] industry with many layoffs; our youth had then to compete with MA students to enroll in training classes."

Who's Who in the Labor Market

The focus of this paper is collaboration—and while overall unemployment and employment growth by sector can have an impact, it may also be useful to go beneath the aggregate statistics to see how industries vary by ethnicity and think about how this too can impact collaboration. **Tables 2.4A** through **2.7B** do this for each region, with the first table in each series showing the ethnic composition of major industries. The second in each series of table cuts the data in another way to demonstrate the industrial mix for each major ethnic group. To conserve space, we have collapsed some of the smaller industries into larger categories (such as combining farming, natural resources and mining).

In Fresno, Latinos are over-represented by both measure in farming as well as in hospitality and manufacturing; African Americans are well-represented in education and health services and have a significant presence in trade, transportation and utilities; and Asians are disproportionately located in manufacturing. All of these could filter into sectoral job emphases and inform the Fresno strategy—given the pattern, for example, it is little surprise that FWBH has chosen to work with the Regional Jobs Initiative and its emphases on manufacturing, hospitality and other clusters.

In Los Angeles, the most striking features in the data are the overrepresentation of Latinos in manufacturing, hospitality and construction—and the very low representation of African Americans in those areas. Part of this may be due to immigrant competition and displacement—but it also suggests why the recent LAWBH focus on construction, particularly for younger individuals from South Central Los Angeles, might be important. Sacramento and San Diego show a similar underrepresentation of African Americans in construction. In Sacramento, African Americans are actually well-represented in manufacturing; in San Diego, they are not. In every area, Latinos are poorly represented in education and health services, suggesting both a gap that CWBH initiatives can address and the existing challenge.

Why is all this important to the question of collaboration? The fact that different ethnic groups have different employment patterns and needs suggests the balancing act that must be accomplished in figuring out a common strategy. It is not enough to say that everyone is working on employment—even if they are, the sectors chosen and the strategies developed might be different depending on the constituency. For example, while health care seems to be a natural sector for an initiative on work and health, Latinos seem to have very low access to such jobs and prospects may not be bright, particularly in light of immigration issues. Construction is another "natural" for job placement, especially in places where development has been raging or is soon to start up, but African Americans seem quite shut out compared to their presence in the regional populations. To learn more about future employment trends in the regions, refer to **Appendix 2**. Figuring out how to balance needs and timing is the stuff of developing an honest collaborative strategy for a shared set of goals.

TABLE 2.4A Fresno County: Percent Racial/Ethnic Composition by Industry, 2005.
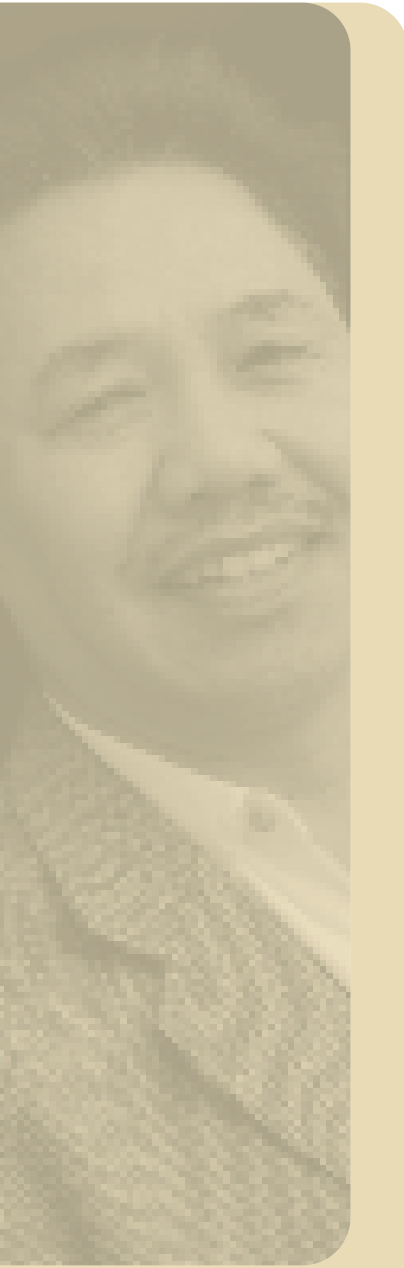
	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	49.9	36.9	6	5.1	2.1
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	34.4	52	2.8	9.1	1.6
Education and Health Services	49	31.3	6.3	10.2	3.2
Professional and Business Services	42.7	43.8	6.4	6.4	0.7
Information and Financial Activities	57.7	29.8	4.6	7	1
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	42.2	42	6.4	7.4	2
Manufacturing	26.5	56.2	1.7	15.5	0.2
Construction	49.9	45.7	1.2	1.1	2.1
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	14.8	78.7	3.1	3.4	0
All Industries Combined	**41.4**	**44.3**	**4.7**	**7.9**	**1.7**

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.4B Fresno County: Percent Industrial Composition by Race/Ethnicity, 2005.

	ALL	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	6.9	8.3	5.8	8.7	4.5	8.4
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	10.8	9	12.7	6.4	12.5	10.3
Education and Health Services	22.3	26.4	15.8	29.6	28.9	41.9
Professional and Business Services	9.5	9.8	9.4	12.7	7.7	3.8
Information and Financial Activities	6.9	9.7	4.7	6.7	6.1	3.9
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	18.7	19.1	17.7	25.2	17.6	21.7
Manufacturing	9.2	5.9	11.7	3.3	18.1	1
Construction	7.4	8.9	7.6	1.9	1	9
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	8.2	2.9	14.6	5.4	3.6	0

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.5A L.A. County: Percent Racial/Ethnic Composition by Industry, 2005.

	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	35.5	27.7	21.1	13.7	2
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	28.4	49.5	5.8	14.9	1.4
Education and Health Services	35.9	33.5	11.8	16.8	2.1
Professional and Business Services	41	35.1	9	13.5	1.5
Information and Financial Activities	48.9	25	8.7	15.9	1.6
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	28.4	43.7	9.4	16.7	1.8
Manufacturing	23.5	58.3	3.8	13.4	1
Construction	25.2	65.1	3.6	5.1	1
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	22.7	64.6	2.1	9.7	1
All Industries Combined	**33**	**42.5**	**8.4**	**14.6**	**1.6**

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.5B L.A. County: Percent Industrial Composition by Race/Ethnicity, 2005.

	ALL	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	3.3	3.6	2.2	8.3	3.1	4.1
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	14.4	12.4	16.8	10	14.7	13.2
Education and Health Services	18.7	20.4	14.8	26.4	21.5	24.6
Professional and Business Services	12	14.9	9.9	12.8	11.1	11.7
Information and Financial Activities	11.5	17	6.7	11.8	12.5	11.4
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	19.2	16.5	19.7	21.5	21.9	21.8
Manufacturing	13.7	9.7	18.8	6.2	12.6	8.6
Construction	6.9	5.3	10.6	2.9	2.4	4.4
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.2

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.6A Sacramento County: Percent Racial/Ethnic Composition by Industry, 2005.

	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	56.4	17.8	9.5	12.7	3.6
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	49.9	20.5	8.1	18.8	2.7
Education and Health Services	59.9	12.2	10.7	14.7	2.5
Professional and Business Services	60.3	14.0	5.8	15.3	4.6
Information and Financial Activities	60.6	14.1	8.8	11.4	5.1
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	58.3	14.9	8.9	14.7	3.3
Manufacturing	49.0	15.6	11.8	21.5	2.1
Construction	58.5	31.4	2.4	5.3	2.3
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	46.3	26.5	24.2	2.9	0
All Industries Combined	**57.5**	**16.6**	**8.6**	**14.0**	**3.3**

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.6B   Sacramento County: Percent Industrial Composition by Race/Ethnicity, 2005.

	ALL	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	11.5	11.3	12.3	12.8	10.4	12.6
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	9.8	8.5	12.1	9.2	13.1	8.1
Education and Health Services	20.9	21.8	15.3	26.1	21.8	16
Professional and Business Services	11.8	12.3	9.9	8	12.8	16.3
Information and Financial Activities	12	12.6	10.2	12.3	9.7	18.5
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	18	18.3	16.1	18.6	18.8	18
Manufacturing	6.4	5.4	6	8.8	9.8	4
Construction	9.2	9.3	17.3	2.6	3.5	6.4
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.5	0.1	0

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.7A   San Diego County: Percent Racial/Ethnic Composition by Industry, 2005.

	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	56.5	17.6	11.5	11.1	3.4
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	44.7	38.9	2.8	11.7	1.8
Education and Health Services	58.4	20.3	4.8	13.3	3.1
Professional and Business Services	63	22	3.4	9.9	1.7
Information and Financial Activities	66.3	16.6	4.5	9.9	2.8
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	55.9	25.9	5.2	11	1.9
Manufacturing	48.7	26.9	2.1	20.5	1.9
Construction	56.1	36.2	2	3.3	2.4
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	44.6	52.4	1.4	1.3	0.2
All Industries Combined	**56.3**	**25.5**	**4.3**	**11.6**	**2.3**

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

TABLE 2.7B   San Diego County: Percent Industrial Composition by Race/Ethnicity, 2005.

	ALL	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Government	6.2	6.2	4.3	16.8	5.9	9
Leisure, Hospitality and Other Services	13.1	10.4	19.9	8.4	13.2	10.3
Education and Health Services	20.6	21.4	16.4	23.2	23.6	27.6
Professional and Business Services	14.1	15.7	12.2	11.2	12	10.1
Information and Financial Activities	10.5	12.4	6.8	11	9	12.5
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	16.7	16.6	17	20.3	15.9	13.9
Manufacturing	10.4	9	10.9	5.1	18.2	8.4
Construction	7.8	7.7	11	3.6	2.2	8.1
Farming, Natural Resources and Mining	0.7	0.6	1.5	0.2	0.1	0.1

Source: 2005 American Communities Survey (ACS), authors' calculations. Notes: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above); the "Other" category includes Native American/Alaskan Natives, those who reported a race of "other" and those who reported two or more races.

Regional Political and Policy Landscapes

Shifting demographics and economics are not the only factors in determining success in employment policy and placing workers in optimal positions.

The work of any collaborative seeking positive change is also affected by the landscape of its region, particularly along three other dimensions:

- neighborhood level challenges of a shifting regional demographic;
- the region's political dynamics, including its business class and the role of organized labor; and
- the general political climate and opportunity structure.

While each of these dimensions influences the work of the CWBH collaboratives in multiple ways, both the economy and political dynamics (particularly the state of the labor market and the relationships of business and labor) relate most to the organizations' employment-related work. Political climate—its opportunities and obstacles—can have the largest impact on the organizations' attempts to change public policy, influenced also by the challenges of developing organizing strategies to bridge lines of race and income.

Constituency and Collaboration

While the collaboratives in each region were trying to influence regional dynamics, they were also focused on particular neighborhoods. Residents of these focus neighborhoods all sharing a common experience of poverty; the poverty rates of their core constituents exceed those of the regional averages. The collaboratives' focus on their respective neighborhoods also reveals struggles and opportunities regarding multiracial alliances and other dynamics.

To look at the issue more closely, we decided to examine the neighborhoods the collaboratives are meant to serve. To define these, we relied on both early documents from the CWBH process and asked the collaborative organizations to clarify as needed. For Fresno, that meant that we considered all "extreme poverty" tracts (those with the poverty rate exceeding 40%); in Los Angeles, we

included Chinatown, Boyle Heights, and South L.A.; in Sacramento, the neighborhoods of Del Paso Heights and Fruitridge; and in San Diego, we included Memorial, Stockton, Grant Hill, Logan Heights, and Barrio Logan. Again, we are aware that several of the organizations in each region have a much broader scope, organizing constituencies to influence policy on a larger scale.

Still, the CWBH initiative was also supposed to reflect a neighborhood frame and these are the areas usually considered to be in the collaborative orbits (for a visual idea of the neighborhoods, see **Figures 3.1** to **3.5**; **3.1** shows the various regions within California and the next four maps show the neighborhoods in the main central city of the region).
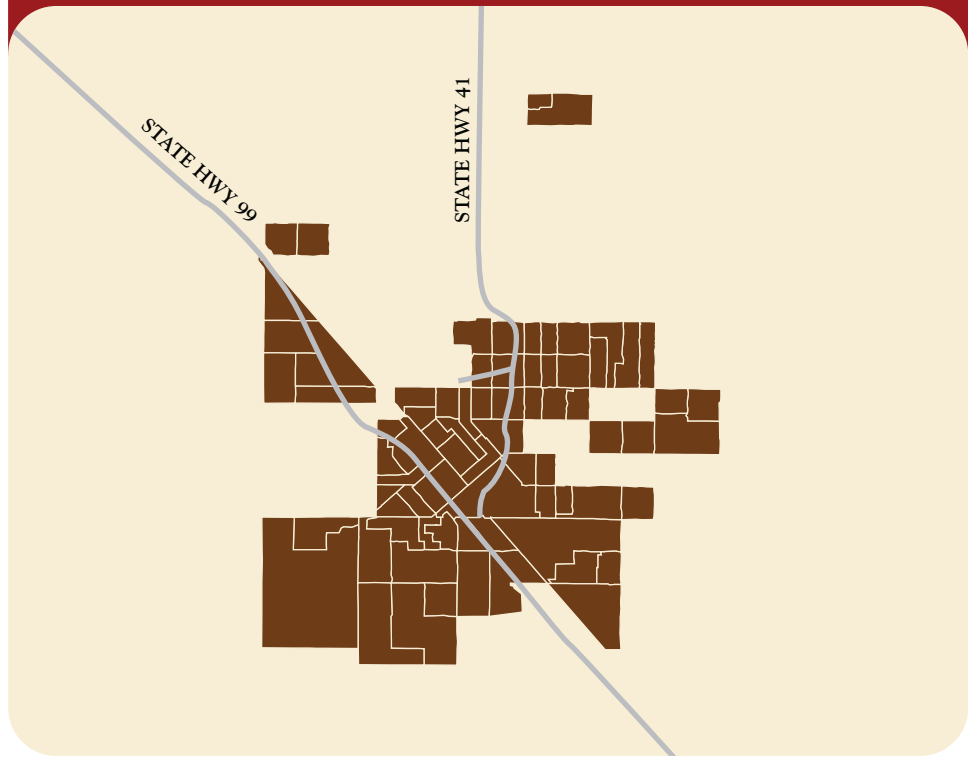
FIGURE 3.1

SACRAMENTO
FRESNO
LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO

Sacramento Works for Better Health Neighborhoods

Fresno Works for Better Health Neighborhoods

Los Angeles Works for Better Health Neighborhoods

San Diego Works for Better Health Neighborhoods

FIGURE 3.2 Fresno Neighborhoods

STATE HWY 99

STATE HWY 41

FIGURE 3.3 Los Angeles Neighborhoods

I 5

I 10

STATE HWY 60

I 405

I 710

I 105

I 110
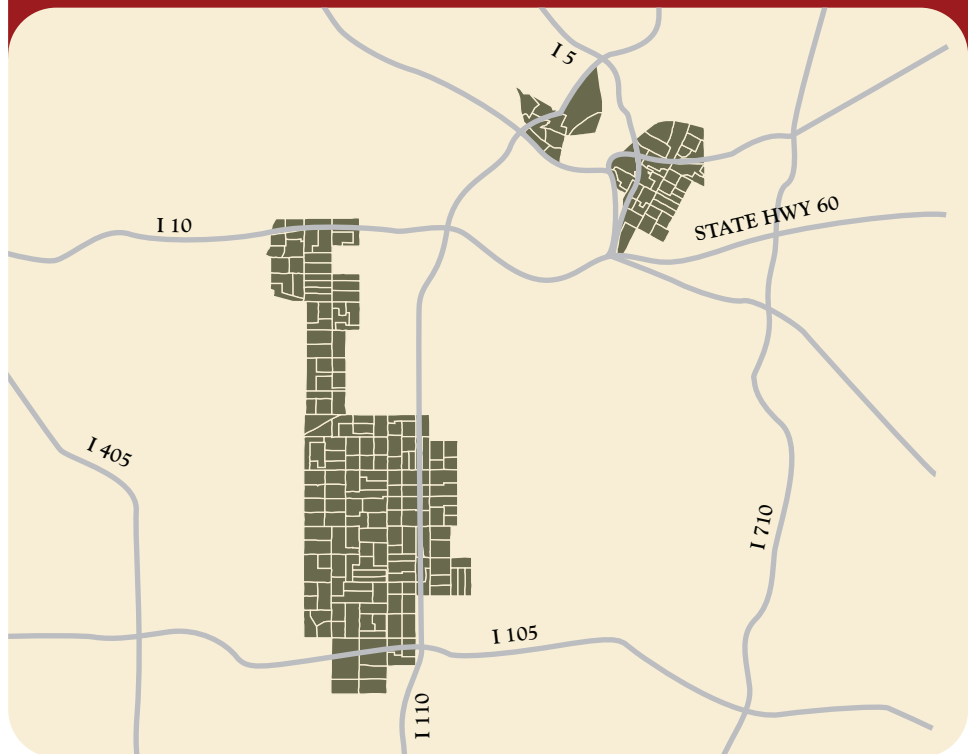
FIGURE 3.4 Sacramento Neighborhoods

STATE HWY 16

SACRAMENTO FWY

I 80

US HWY 50

I 5
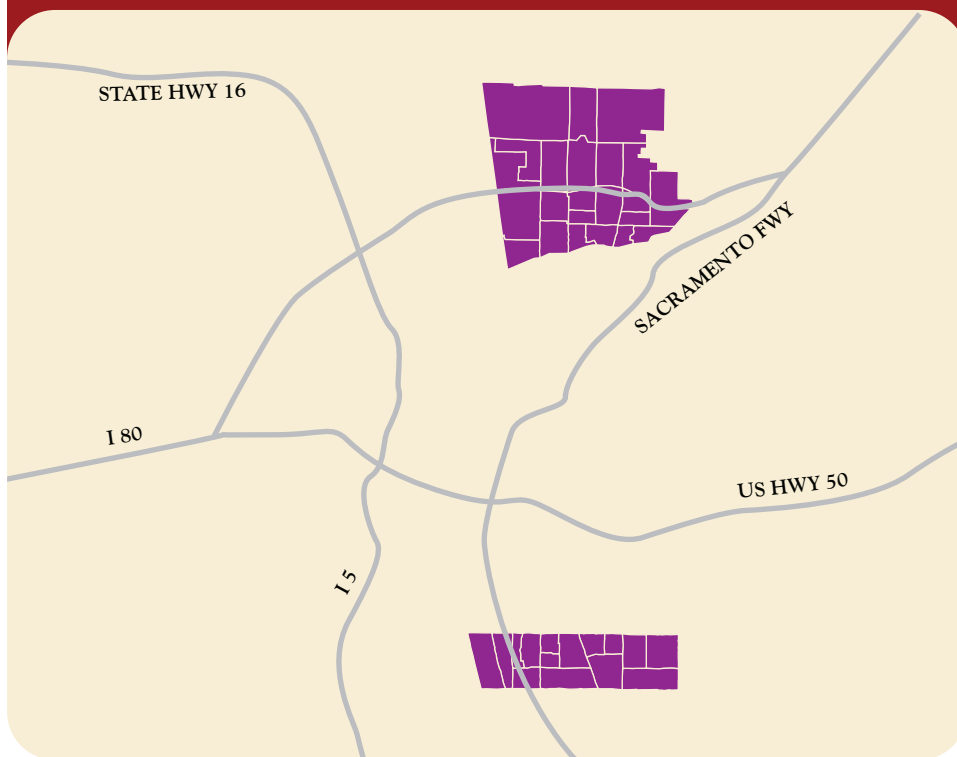
FIGURE 3.5 San Diego Neighborhoods

I 15

I 5

STATE HWY 94

I 805

I 5

PACIFIC OCEAN

Table 3.1 offers a detailed profile of the CWBH neighborhoods, in each case making a comparison to the county in which they are located. It is noteworthy how the CWBH neighborhoods differ dramatically from the surrounding counties. Los Angeles County, for example, was 31 percent white in 2000 whereas the CWBH neighborhoods were nearly 99 percent people of color. Poverty rates are generally two to three times as high as the overall county—with San Diego setting the pace with a neighborhood poverty rate that is nearly four times that of the county. Interestingly, the Los Angeles neighborhoods are no more immigrant than the county; neighborhoods in the other three regions are made up of far more immigrants. In general, the

neighborhoods exhibit a dearth of college-educated individuals, suggesting the need for a job approach more suited to those with lower- and mid-level skills and education.

For Fresno, poverty is a particularly pressing concern, especially after the Brookings Institution 2005 report, *Katrina's Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America*, reported that Fresno had the highest concentrated poverty rate (defined as the proportion of all poor people citywide who lived in neighborhoods with more than 40 percent of the population living below the federal poverty threshold) among large U.S. cities, with 43.5 percent of the poor

TABLE 3.1   Neighborhood and County Characteristics, 2000.

	FRESNO CWBH Neighborhoods	County	LOS ANGELES CWBH Neighborhoods	County	SACRAMENTO CWBH Neighborhoods	County	SAN DIEGO CWBH Neighborhoods	County
Demographics (%)								
White	11.8	39.6	1.5	30.9	29.4	57.7	8.1	54.9
Latino	57.1	44.1	54.4	44.6	26	16	79.2	26.7
Black	11.7	5	38.2	9.4	16.7	9.5	9.8	5.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	16	7.9	4.4	12.1	21.8	11.3	1.3	9.2
Other	3.4	3.5	1.5	3	6	5.5	1.6	3.8
Pop. over 18 years	60.2	68	65.2	72.1	63	72.5	63.4	74.4
Foreign born	32.8	21.1	36.3	36.2	26.9	16.1	44.1	21.5
Arrived pre-1980	5.7	5.6	9.5	11.1	4.7	4.3	10.5	7.1
Arrived during the 1980s	12.8	7.1	13.9	12.5	9.8	4.7	17.1	6.8
Arrived during the 1990s	14.4	8.4	12.9	12.6	12.4	7.1	16.5	7.7
Education (%)								
Less than high school	60	32.5	52.2	30.1	37.8	16.7	59	17.4
High school graduate	17.8	21.1	20.1	18.8	27.4	22.9	20.1	19.9
Some college	18.2	28.9	20.8	26.2	27.8	35.6	15.9	33.2
B.A. and above	3.9	17.5	6.8	24.9	7	24.8	5	29.5
Economic Characteristics (%)								
Median household income	$20,359	$41,746	$25,530	$51,265	$30,639	$52,675	$22,204	$60,087
Poverty rate	49.1	22.9	33.7	17.9	29.1	14.1	40.7	12.4
150% poverty rate	67.8	37.1	51.9	29.9	46.9	23.3	62.8	21.8
200% poverty rate	79.2	48.3	64.7	39.9	58.8	31.9	75.6	30.6

Source: Authors calculations from the 2000 Census Summary Files 1 and 3. Notes: 1) All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are non-Hispanic (e.g. all who responded that they were of Hispanic descent were placed in the Latino category above). 2) Median household income figures in the "2000" columns are actually from 1999, and all figures are in 2005 dollars. 3) Education information is restricted to population 25 years and over.

population in Fresno living in such extreme-poverty neighborhoods.[4] West Fresno, a focal point for FWBH, is among these communities.

But the nature of who lives in those communities of concentrated poverty has changed dramatically in Fresno. The city has concentrations of African-American communities with a long history in the region but many neighborhoods are increasingly home to Latinos and other newer immigrant groups. According to one Fresno leader, "There is a perception that we are all black but that was in the 60s and 70s. It is no longer 70 percent black in West Fresno.... West Fresno is an entry point for new poor people—then they move out." The broader entry role for Fresno is supported by data from the 2005 American Community Survey: in the County of Fresno, a language other than English was spoken at home in 40.8 percent of households—a proxy for measuring immigration populations. And in the CWBH neighborhoods of Fresno, 32.8 percent of residents are foreign born (Census 2000). These neighborhoods are also, as noted in **Table 3.1**, 11.8 percent white, 57.1 percent Latino, 11.7 percent African American and 16 percent Asian/Pacific Islander (Census 2000).

Due to the diversity, CWBH organizers in Fresno have remarked: "We *have* to have multi-ethnic coalitions. We can lead the charge in multi-ethnic coalitions. FWBH could be a case study." But organizers note that attracting all ethnic groups to their work is sometimes difficult: "Blacks have a longer history and are more engaged here.... Latinos are harder to get engaged in the work we do here. The Latino and African American relationship is not addressed much."

The challenges of interethnic organizing are also important in Sacramento's focus neighborhoods of Del Paso Heights and Fruitridge. **Table 3.1** compares Del Paso Heights and Fruitridge to the city and county of Sacramento and illustrates that the

Fresno had the highest concentrated poverty rate (defined as the proportion of all poor people citywide who lived in neighborhoods with more than 40 percent of the population living below the federal poverty threshold)...

demographics are much less white.[5] The neighborhoods themselves also differ. Interestingly, Del Paso Heights represents a sort of perfect mixture in which each of the major ethnic groups comprises about a quarter of the population, while in Fruitridge, Latinos represent 34 percent of the population, Anglos 29 percent,

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[4] Alan Berube and Bruce Katz. 2005. *Katrina's Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America.* Brookings Institution. Spatial Analysis in Metropolitan Policy.

[5] Asian Resources also has a small percentage of clients who reside in the Broadway and Citrus Heights locations and outlying areas but the majority of the clients reside in the Fruitridge neighborhood.

Asian-Pacific Islanders 28 percent, and African Americans nine percent. As it turns out, Sacramento as a whole is quite diverse, although its suburbs are much less so. What differentiates Del Paso and Fruitridge is the relatively high percent of non-citizens and the striking gaps with the region in terms of income and poverty rates. Building collaborations in this area require that inter-ethnic communication and a keen sense of social justice be guiding lights: both MAN and Asian Resources have sought to do this.[6]

In San Diego the CWBH neighborhoods, including Barrio Logan and Sherman Heights, are very low income, with poverty rates topping 40 percent as compared to the regional average of 12.4 percent. People of color represent over 90 percent and women are 56 percent of the residents[7]. The overwhelming share of the residents are Latino and 44 percent of the population is foreign-born; African Americans are a scant 10 percent of the population, which is well above the county average but is still very low. The implication is that issues of more interest to the African-American population could get lost in the mix, and it has been important to keep those interests up front in order to maintain an effective collaboration.

Los Angeles represents one of the more difficult challenges in interethnic coalition-building—although there has also been great progress, both within the CWBH collaborative and more generally in Los Angeles. In South L.A., there has been a rapid and ongoing demographic change to a far more Latino area, and building black-Latino conversations and leadership has been central. While the Asian population is also important in Los Angeles, the demographic breakdown afforded in **Table 3.1** suggests that the CWBH area is mainly a black-brown affair, with the populations comprising 54 and 38 percent respectively. The Latino percentage is not far off the county average—the black population is, on the other hand, four times above the county percent.

Figuring how to build multiracial collaboratives is therefore different in each region but there are some key similarities. Among these is the shift—sometimes fast, sometimes slow—in the percent of African-American residents. In Fresno, Sacramento, San Diego and Los Angeles, there has been a decrease in black presence and political power, and part of the task of the collaboratives is to make sure that this does not lead to an abandonment of employment concerns central to the African-American population.

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[6] Although Asian Resources is naturally dedicated to representing the Asian population, this represents a tremendously diverse population, made even more so because they also serve many immigrants from former Soviet block countries as well. In fact, Asian Resources constituency and staff speak a total of 16 languages, including Armenian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Farsi, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Ukranian, along with the more expected dominant East Asian and Southeast Asian languages.

[7] From The California Endowment Disparities Recommendations November 1, 2006 for MAAC.

Regional Business and Labor Leadership

The role of business leadership in a region can have a profound impact on the CWBH collaborations. Collaborative organizations could, for example, be united in opposition to major business interests or could also find themselves building relationships with business leaders that can then strengthen the collaborative's power in the region. In some of the CWBH regions, there is a prominent regional business entity. However the role a regional business organization plays can vary from strong to ineffective, and the relationships between the collaboratives and the regional business entity may vary as well. Similarly, relationships with labor unions can either strengthen community-based action, or powerful labor unions can actually detract from community voice by marginalizing them in regional political processes.

In Fresno, there is a prominent regional economic development initiative called the Regional Jobs Initiative (RJI). The RJI "aims to generate long-term, sustainable economic development in the Fresno Region by diversifying the industrial and economic base to deal with unemployment."[8] It is led by Fresno County Supervisor Susan Anderson, Clovis Mayor Lynne Ashbeck and Fresno Mayor Alan Autry, along with business, education, civic and labor leaders.

While we heard critiques of the RJI—it is definitely considered a "mainstream" organization—it is acknowledged by all members of the collaborative that the relationship with RJI is key. The leader of the RJI, Ashley Sweargin, is very instrumental in the community and the FWBH has built a solid relationship with her. The hard work needed to build these relationships has and will continue to pay off for the FWBH collaborative. As one FWBH leader explained,

> "We sit on RJI and the Empowerment Zone boards…. We had to make a number of presentations and a number of requests just to get at the table. It took a while but now we're on both those boards as a collaborative member…. The FWBH has been working to integrate their work with RJI. It has had its challenges, but they have also made headway. For example, leadership sits on each others Boards and RJI sponsored the evening event before the fall 2006 Summit that was organized by FWBH."

In Fresno, labor unions are less powerful, and their links to the CWBH organizations are not significant. In fact, in Fresno none of the FWBH organizations even mentioned labor unions during interviews with them about their work and their allies. There is a labor-community organization in the region, the Community Alliance, which describes itself as "an independent voice for workers and progressive groups

in the Central San Joaquin Valley."[9] Yet the Community Alliance lists just one of the FWBH organizations (Fresno Center for New Americans) on its website's list of affiliated community groups. The Alliance also appears to be more oppositional than the FWBH agencies, all of whom seem more committed to consensus building with diverse actors. This is true of Fresno West and the Center for New Americans but is also true of One by One—often such faith-based community organizing efforts are more oppositional, along Alinsky-style organizing line, but One by One is very much committed to consensus-building. In any case, the closer ties with business make sense in light of the weakened state of labor, and this impacts how the collaborative works together and how it positions itself in the region.

In Los Angeles the business class is fragmented, which has enabled many community-based organizations to step in and play a larger role in leading the region and setting policy priorities, especially in working with the city's Workforce Investment Board (WIB). ACJC director Benetta Johnson serves on the WIB Board for the City of L.A., on the policy and advocacy committee. She explains: "I was influential in adding international trade and logistics and construction to their sectors." This achievement is especially important because international trade, construction, transportation, warehousing and sales are industries which are regional in

nature and are accessible to disadvantaged communities, since workers often do not need a high school degree to enter the industry. But the level of influence some of these organizations had in shaping business and employment decisions also caused internal difficulties in their work with their collaborative partners. For example, one organizer at the Chinatown Service Center also said that, "Openings in the WIB led SCOPE to push for investing dollars into sectoral training. Moving into sectoral investments makes sense; but we felt it pulled resources away from the Work Source [Center] pool of money."

In Los Angeles both ACJC and SCOPE have worked with labor unions and have had successful results. Benetta Johnson notes: "I'm meeting weekly with the Mayor's office to develop a construction initiative and a Project Labor Agreement, which is a union document, that uses a list at hiring halls rather than working directly with contractors." Organizers at SCOPE also work with unions through their homecare worker training. They have a Memorandum of Understanding with the SEIU 434B (homecare workers union) to deliver their workers training curriculum. Also, Chinatown Service Center organizers have a proposal to the city WIB to focus on private security guards, a profession that is the target of revitalized organizing efforts by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

[9] See http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/mission_statement.htm.

In broad terms, the salient point is that Los Angeles has gone from being one of the most anti-union cities in the U.S. to one of the most union-friendly in terms of policy initiatives and openness at City Hall. While this has not translated into significant progress on the wage front as of yet, the impact on the LAWBH collaborative is that unions have significant room for influence and those within the collaborative with better ties to unions may have more "outside" power.

Sacramento, while having strong business leadership, remains somewhat fragmented with only minimal ties with community-based organizations. Sacramento hosts a number of statewide business organizations based in Sacramento, and there is also a range of local chambers of commerce in cities throughout the region.[10] The Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization (SACTO) is a long standing regional public/private partnership that coordinates economic development initiatives in the region.[11] Valley Vision is another regional "civic entrepreneur" organization founded in 1994 and recognized as part of the Irvine Foundation's regional leadership network. Valley Vision produces a bi-annual Quality of Life Index, promotes various regional air quality, transportation, open space and health care initiatives and regularly publishes an e-newsletter to keep members, friends, contributors and community members informed of efforts to improve and sustain a high quality of life in the Sacramento region. Building strong relationships with either SACTO or Valley Vision was not considered a priority for either of the organizations in the Sacramento collaborative, since the boards have minimal representation from community development organizations and their agendas reflect the priorities of more powerful interests in the region.

Los Angeles has gone from being one of the most anti-union cities in the U.S. to one of the most union-friendly in terms of policy initiatives and openness at City Hall.

Nonetheless, especially compared to the Bay Area or Silicon Valley, business in the Sacramento region remains relatively unorganized and fragmented—and we think that the local business interests may be somewhat suppressed by the heavy presence of statewide business groupings and the high portion of public sector jobs in the region (see **Figure 3.2**; over a quarter of employment in Sacramento County is in government).

In Sacramento unionization rates are slightly higher than the statewide average in the private sector, and

[10] SACOG provides a list of local Chambers of Commerce in the area: http://www.regionalgateway.org/links/chambersofcommerce.cfm.
[11] www.sactoedc.org.

somewhat lower than the statewide average in the public sector. The strongest unions in the area are public sector unions, building trades unions and the Service Employees International Union, which has had a high profile organizing campaign in the building services industry. SEIU also represents workers in the health care industry. When Sacramento Valley Organizing Coalition (SVOC) was part of the SWBH collaborative, they worked with SEIU in their efforts to build career opportunities in health care in the region. The Sacramento Central Labor Council could have been a potential regional ally for the initiative, especially after Grantland Johnson—former City Councilman, County Supervisor, and California Health and Human Services Secretary under Governor Gray Davis—became Community and Economic Development Director for the Council in 2004, bringing a prominent, experienced African-American political voice to labor in the region. Grantland grew up in Del Paso Heights, and when he was still at Health and Human Services was actually involved in early discussions with MAN about their strategies within the CWBH project. Programmatically, however, the Central Labor Council has had little engagement with the CWBH, and subsequent to SVOC's withdrawal from CWBH, unions have not been an active part of the CWBH initiative in the Sacramento region.

As a result of business fragmentation, the disconnect with labor, and the withdrawal of SVOC, the two remaining collaborative members seem to exist in a more neighborhood-oriented frame. It is one which is focused on improving job placement and job training for the region, but is less focused on trying to influence broader regional policies.

In San Diego, the business class, especially the developers and real estate lobby, is rightly viewed by the SDWBH organizations as very powerful. All members of the San Diego collaborative are involved in A Community Coalition for Responsible Development (ACCORD), a coalition that has fought for a Community Benefits Agreement, although the organizations have varying influence. ACCORD has stirred great opposition by business interests, particularly the Association of General Contractors. In general, one SDWBH leader explains that "This is Pete Wilson country," referring to San Diego's former Republican mayor who led the city towards becoming a hub of international trade and was a proponent of business interests, privatizing health care systems, deregulating energy markets and cutting property taxes.

Labor is, of course, an intimate partner in San Diego: one of the SDWBH members, the Center for Policy Initiatives (CPI), is a think-and-action-tank that

is unabashedly affiliated with labor. The other organizations are more wary of labor's power even though they are also uneasy with the role of business. And while labor thought it was on the upswing in terms of council representation in recent years, the defeat of a labor-supported candidate for mayor and a concerted effort to reduce labor and progressive influence has significantly changed the political climate. Thus, for the other groups, the collaboration with labor cuts in multiple and complicated ways; the Fresno groups, for example, do not face this complication as they can pay lip service to labor and find productive alliances in the business community.

Political Climate and Opportunity

Each of the regions face different political climates, both in the longer run and the short-run. These political climates structure opportunity and impact the possibilities for successful collaboration.

As a region, for example, Fresno feels that its interests are consistently overlooked by state policymakers and that state resources are under-distributed to the Central Valley. According to one leader, "We're only 6 of 120 legislators. What the Bay Area and Southern California want they get. Fresno doesn't get much from the state." This sense of being shut out actually raises the incentives for collaboration, and also creates openings for allying with business and other regional actors.

Collaboration is also enhanced by the sense that actually achieving political and policy change in this traditionally conservative part of the state will only be won by banding together. In the words of one leader, "The city council members need education. We're the largest city that doesn't have inclusionary zoning. This is a conservative area and so we wind up finding a lot of power in arguing for more traditional issues, like public safety."

Aside from having to adopt seemingly conservative issues, the political atmosphere has suggested the importance of some degree of group discipline. In the words of one Fresno leader, "While we have allies at some of the right tables they do not use power to make real change. If there's anything to do with regionalism then we do not get anything. It does not trickle down." As a result, they have found that it does not pay to clash amongst themselves but rather to present a more united front and voice. Of all the regions, this is the one where FWBH is "branded" as a single entity rather than simply a collection of its elements.

At the same time, there have been some political opportunities and changes favorable to FWBH's work, including a progressive Fresno mayor, a motivated state senator from the Central Valley and the first Asian-American member of Fresno's city council. One leader explains,

"[California State Senator] Dean Florez is not status quo; he's making something different for the valley. Mayor Autry made some changes—including fighting with Governor Schwarzenegger, pushing the Valley Initiative, getting some notoriety for the valley…. There is also Blong Xiong who is now on the Fresno City Council."

FWBH also has direct links to council members and the mayor; FWBH has been able to build a credible voice that is taken seriously and not considered to be an outsider. During implementation of the Fresno Empowerment Zone, for example, FWBH approached the city and asked to get involved in RJI and the Empowerment Zone. FWBH leaders explained that afterwards "FWBH became more recognized [by city leaders] when they saw we were able to do some of the work for them." Additionally, the leadership of One by One has been involved in local boards and commissions. Leaders of One by One explain that "The changes in the political landscape have acted in our favor, especially with the School Board."

Probably what contributes most to the incentives for collaboration is the sense that, in the words of the FWBH coordinator, "Fresno is ripe for change." As the coordinator Veda Ramsey describes,

"The political landscape has changed dramatically in terms of openness, and with regard to having people of color at

the table…. Because the San Joaquin Valley has been left out there's such a need to make change and deal with crime. We're not Blue or Red but more Purple, due to our needs regarding crime, public resources, etc. We still have a ways to go, but even the mayor is coming out against concentrated poverty."

A key moment for FWBH was its Fall 2006 Summit, "Worlds Apart, Futures Together," in which issues of concentrated poverty were raised, put on the public agenda, and received the support of numerous political actors. The success of the Summit both reflected the degree of collaboration between the FWBH partners and created new political opportunities that can further strengthen the incentives for collaboration. The external landscape, in short, has had a significant impact.

The external political landscape has also had an important impact in Los Angeles but in an opposite direction. In comparison to Fresno, L.A.'s political shifts over the last few years have presented a myriad of political openings to progressive organizers in the region.

When asked to list how shifts in the political landscape had affected their work, leaders from the Community Coalition (CoCo) ticked off a long list: greater opening with the building trades, the WIB's new Executive Director and new appointments on WIB with more labor interests, and

Denise Fairchild's appointment as the mayor's "economic development czar" in South L.A. They also said that while the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is "pretty much closed with a padlock," the mayor's new influence means that the "LAUSD responds differently to us." Additionally, organizers pointed out that the mayor's effort for economic development and efforts for "streamlining construction" meant that there are a large number of cranes throughout the city, an indicator of more jobs, and that this has created pressure on the building trades to open up.

But what this abundance of openings creates is also the possibility for different levels of access. Anthony Thigpenn of SCOPE, for example, ran the mayor's field operations in the last election; both SCOPE and CoCo are important players in L.A.'s politics. According to one Chinatown Service Center organizer, "The activist mayor has changed the terrain. He's ambitious, he's shaken up the political structure, he creates openings. This makes campaigns seem possible." But the same organizer notes that: "Still there are no more resources. We need resources to take advantage of the openings."

It is, in short, the best of times and the worst of times. There are tremendous openings but this can enhance the incentives for allying with the most powerful groups to take advantage of them—and since there is an unevenness of power, influence, and political style within LAWBH, such alliances may occur elsewhere.

The success of the Summit was both a reflection of the degree of collaboration between the FWBH partners, and created new political opportunities that can further strengthen the incentives for collaboration.

For San Diego, the political climate has changed dramatically. One leader notes that "the wave from 1998 to 2005 was a swell of progressive organizing," including the 2001 election of liberal Donna Frye to the city council. Frye's election was followed by another election that yielded six Democratic seats on the council and a seeming drift away from San Diego's traditional conservative politics. The shift in power from conservatives to progressives in the region was temporary and altered by the following factors:

- The housing market softened throughout the state but San Diego led the decline, and this led to more concern with the budget and the economic future.
- A pension and fiscal crisis erupted in San Diego and while a solution could have been found through tax increases, this ran against San Diego's traditional low-tax atmosphere.
- The media took a negative view of unions, particularly in light of the pension crisis, with USA Today

dubbing San Diego "Enron by the Sea."[12]

- New conservative institutions emerged in San Diego, including the Performance Institute, promoting government downsizing, privatization and ending government contracts with unions.[13]
- An election took place which led to a strong mayor system, a more conservative mayor and the re-emergence of a conservative majority on the City Council.

Political backlash to the progressive gains was described as "stunning" and one SDWBH leader said, "We're back to square one now with changes in political context. Back to the beginning but with more relationships." Partly as a result, the construction industry became even more opposed to project labor agreements and this had made further progress on community benefits a challenge.

Working in the other direction, however, has been a striking shift in San Diego with regard to immigration. Even as the fiscal situation became tighter and labor unions more isolated, a new community- and faith-based effort, launched with the support of MAAC, helped to organize the largest political march in San Diego's history as part of the spring 2006 demonstrations for immigrant rights. The new organization, Justice

Overcoming Boundaries (JOB), is affiliated with the Gamaliel Foundation, and MAAC staff were instrumental in this effort, including having one of MAAC's former staff members being the lead to organize JOB's immigration rights work.

This is fragmentation but not that born of the abundant opportunities of L.A.—rather, the politics seem to be pulling in different directions, with more space for the immigrant work and a closing circle of action for labor. This is a challenge because labor is the most powerful partner, both institutionally and because it has been the initiator of the single project that unifies the SDWBH partners: the struggle for a community benefits agreement. In this atmosphere, collaboration can be a challenge.

In Sacramento, the overall political climate had little impact on the partnerships activities. Much of the focus was on a programmatic level within the target neighborhoods and particular constituencies of the Mutual Assistance Network and Asian Resources. This programmatic focus by and large developed independently from the broader political dynamic. Nonetheless, there were certain political opportunities that emerged from changes in political leadership at a small scale. This was particularly true in Del Paso Heights when

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[12] The article is available at: http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2004-10-24-sandiego-_x.htm.

[13] For more on the Performance Institute see http://www.performanceweb.org/. For more on the Performance Institute's work in San Diego see the CPI report, *Target San Diego: The Right Wing Assault on Urban Democracy and Smart Government*, available at http://www.onlinecpi.org/downloads/Target_SD_CPI2005.pdf.

there was a change in leadership in the School Board. As Richard Dana said:

> *"Having a new superintendent was so important to our goals of involving parents and community…. They were floundering previously, and so they'd keep people outside. [The change in leadership] allowed us to do things that we couldn't have done before on many levels, including—parents had always wanted to be more involved with kids, and suddenly we could take it, apply it, and create a pathway which we'd always talked about—doing real generational change."*

In 2001, the city of Sacramento also sold the Mutual Assistance Network a building called the Firehouse Community Center for only $10. The city no longer had the funding to fully staff the social service programs run out of the building, so they were willing to give the building to MAN in exchange for MAN taking over the programs and running them.

Overall, the story for the Sacramento collaboration is that it has been less affected by the broader political atmosphere. To some extent, this reflects the atmosphere but it also reflects the nature of the organizations and their neighborhood focus. Marx famously wrote the "Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it

under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past." Political climate matters—as does the state of the economy, the nature of business-relations, and the ethnic mix of both regions and neighborhoods. But where the quote above goes wrong is in implying that circumstances are determinant—people also overcome their past to make unexpected changes.

It is to these more intentional elements of building collaboratives—the roles and actions of the partners themselves, all within this context of economy, demography and politics—that we now turn.

Collaboration and the CWBH Organizations

The CWBH Initiative funded a diverse group of organizations; different geographic locations, missions, constituencies and issue areas meant that the collaboratives sometimes faced struggles in coming together as a unit.

At the same time, the fact that the organizations differed from one another was often beneficial as their areas of expertise were complementary.

Coming together has not just been a challenge of the overall collaborative but also for the groups themselves. Struggling to find where to locate the collaborative and work/health efforts within individual organizations took some time, perhaps more than anticipated. As noted earlier, several groups left, some groups are still figuring out their way, and many of them have developed more authentic programming to meet the CWBH and organizational goals. For those groups that have stuck with it, they have learned about the complexities of piecing together the puzzle of a social change initiative to find the delicate balance between neighborhoods and regions, between service delivery and policy advocacy. And they have learned how to strike

that balance even as they are struggling to strike a balance with each other.

The work of the various CWBH organizations fit generally into the following categories:

- *Service Provision:* This includes providing services either through the organization itself or through partners, with services ranging from education and training—such as GED and ESL courses, computer classes and vocational training—to direct services such as job placement, food assistance, daycare and legal services.
- *Economic Development:* This includes efforts to increase a community's living standard, which implies increased per capita income and better education, health and housing. Community development corporations (CDCs) fall within this category.
- *Advocacy:* This includes broader efforts for policy change at various levels of government and in civil society.

• *Community Organizing:* This includes base-level work to improve community voice, including worker organizing, neighborhood organizing and ethnicity-specific organizing, often with significant efforts at popular education and leadership development.

Each organization included in the regional collaboratives plays multiple roles in their community and pigeon-holing them into limited categories is not the intent here; rather, we are trying to categorize the work of organizations for analytical purposes and for the sake of generalizing the experiences so that the lessons may apply in other places and other times.

This chapter examines the nature of the CWBH organizations' work and how it changed as a result of the CWBH initiative's goals and their work as a collaborative. The overall questions we address are:

• How are the CWBH initiative's goals interpreted and actualized by each type of organization?
• Have the goals and requirements of the initiative altered the way each organization fulfills its mission?
• Has participation in the initiative changed the organizations' capacity?
• How did the nature of each organization affect the success of their collaboration?

We organize this section by considering the organizations within their respective regions. We start with Los Angeles, then turn to San Diego, Sacramento and Fresno; the order is dictated by the fact that discussions that come up clearly in one case (for example, the role of Alinsky-style organizing in Sacramento) help set the stage for a discussion in another case (the significance of the lack of an Alinsky tradition in Fresno). While we pay attention to the nature of the different organizations, here as elsewhere, the focus is on the implications for collaboration.

Los Angeles: A Focus on Organizing and Advocacy

In Los Angeles, community organizing and policy advocacy threaded through virtually every organization's work, and provided a central meaning to their collaboration as the organizations were able to share techniques and strategies in this arena. When asked what was a primary benefit of their involvement in LAWBH one organizer with the Community Coalition (CoCo) answered "relationships with organizations that had skills we didn't have."

This was certainly true for those organizations already rooted in organizing, such as CoCo, which describes its goals as "working to build a powerful voice in South Los Angeles to create, influence and change public policy."[14] This put them very much in line with SCOPE and that group's organizing focus, and the LAWBH experience has allowed for a strengthening of that particular

[14] For more information on CoCo see http://ccsapt.charityfinders.org/.
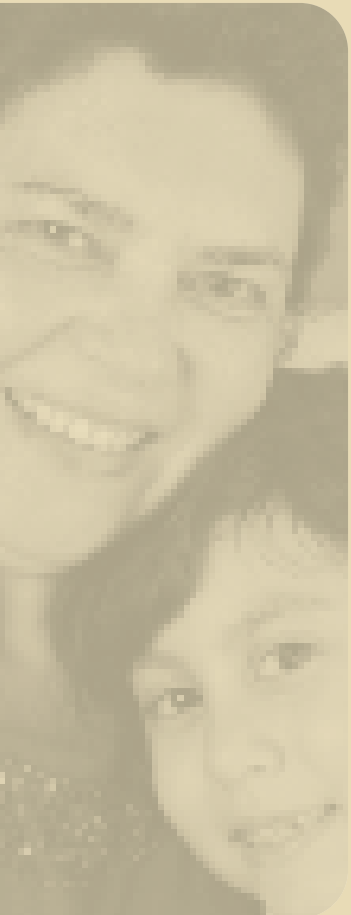
partnership. But CoCo organizers report that the benefits went beyond strengthening existing relationships, noting that work with the collaborative partners brought about a deeper analysis about the problems being addressed. This was achieved partly through participation in a collective learning process and partly through enhanced direct relationships with other groups in different sectors and different neighborhoods.

Even organizations that were structurally rooted in service provision or economic development saw value in community organizing and policy advocacy, and often sought to move in that direction to at least some degree. For example, while ELACC is a CDC, one organizer explained that: "Our model has always been about community and organizing. We may own 12 buildings but it is not impactful until you have organizing." ELACC organizers found that it helped to learn from their CWBH peers about turning community organizing into policy advocacy.

Another LAWBH organization, the Chinatown Service Center (CSC), is primarily a service provider that also does economic development work. It describes itself as "the largest community-based Chinese American health and human service organization in Southern California."[15] One CSC leader explained that: "Organizing

is not as familiar in the Chinese community; there is not a history there. We [in LAWBH] are at different organizing levels." But CSC found that it benefited from learning more about community organizing and advocacy from SCOPE and CoCo. They felt that the coaching, planning and training in community organizing enhanced their programmatic work, such as their workforce programs, and they hope to expand their community organizing efforts in the future. A CSC leader explained, "It has been a plus working with CoCo and SCOPE. They helped by doing the analysis and figuring out how to pick issues. They learned from us too about traditional community service agency. The interaction has been good to get us thinking about organizing."

The learning went two ways. SCOPE is perhaps one of the most experienced advocacy and community organizing groups in Los Angeles, and it has provided training in power analysis, organizing and other tools around the state and country; as well as in the collaborative. One SCOPE organizer said that "it's been a good experience working with the social service sector." Another SCOPE leader notes that: "A big plus of the CWBH is the hands-on role in post-campaign policy implementation. Often we win in a campaign but CWBH gave us leverage to truly implement."

[15] For more information on CSC see http://www.cscla.org/.

In this case, SCOPE's involvement with LAWBH dovetailed with its other workforce development effort that was also underway: Workplace Hollywood, a landmark multi-media job training initiative developed as a result of SCOPE's advocacy work. One of the positive developments of LAWBH was SCOPE's new strategic relationship with ELACC. One SCOPE organizer explained that the relationships built in LAWBH "made Workplace Hollywood's impact deeper; it's about reach, before it wasn't targeting hard-to-serve." ELACC's presence in East L.A. helped Workplace Hollywood make links in that community and Workplace Hollywood also met with an ex-offender task force that included CoCo and the Crenshaw Work Center.

While CWBH did facilitate SCOPE's success in moving from advocacy and organizing into programming and workforce development services like Workplace Hollywood, SCOPE leaders expressed concerns about the initiative's expectation that all the organizations develop these different capacities. One leader noted that "folks shouldn't be required to do organizing *and* be service providers." Indeed, this is exactly why one wants a collaborative and being clearer about what mix needs to be in the collaborative rather than in each organization would be useful for future such initiatives.

The organizations in LAWBH, were, of course, not new to partnerships, coalitions or collaborations. For example, Chinatown Service Center has a long history of collaborations with the City and with other agencies to deliver services to residents in Chinatown. For organizing institutions such as CoCo and SCOPE, most of their inter-organizational relationships are political partnerships that are defined as coalitions. CWBH seems to have encouraged those in traditional collaboratives to think more politically as a coalition; and the reverse is true too, with organizations more familiar with political coalitions now having to enter into organizational and institutional partnerships that focus on delivering training programs.

Even organizations that were structurally rooted in service provision or economic development saw value in community organizing and policy advocacy, and often sought to move in that direction to at least some degree.

However, there was some question in Los Angeles about how successful the horizontal collaboration model really was, with each organization intended to have equal voice and responsibility in the collaborative. One leader argued that "coalition policy work needs to be led by a group with a clear leader.

Then you pick who's in and who's out based on unity on goals." This is a model in which organizational equality is eschewed in favor of collaborative or coalitional effectiveness; this is not the formal structure of the CWBH in any region but one could argue that there are *de facto* leaders in two of the regions, Los Angeles and San Diego.

Regardless of the difficulties, the capacities of the LAWBH organizations to do different types of work did increase, and new relationships were built between organizations that otherwise would not have existed. There were also new complementarities sensed and utilized. As one leader argued, "the concept of the collaborative was great. They brought together groups that didn't work together before. ELACC brought housing; CoCo brought youth and organized a construction academy; SCOPE brought healthcare; ACJC [brought] workforce."

San Diego: Struggling to Find Common Ground

The mix of organizations in San Diego was quite diverse. To start with, CPI's mission is "to build labor power, build community power, and build movement power"[16] and it is clearly an advocacy organization that focuses on research, public education, coalition building, leadership development and policy advocacy. Its leaders interpreted the CWBH workforce development work through this advocacy lens, and took advantage of the resources to support

an effort to push through a community benefits agreement. Interestingly, while CPI works with community-based groups, it is not itself an organizing institution but rather a think tank and coalition-builder. Its goal was always to influence the quality of jobs, rather than connect people to jobs, and this strategy changed little over the life of the CWBH initiative.

In contrast, its partner, MAAC, describes itself as "a multi-purpose social service agency with a successful 41 year history of serving various communities throughout San Diego County."[17] One of the benefits of the SDWBH collaborative, in MAAC organizers' opinion, was that it was "a forum for people to come together." However, during their involvement with CWBH they were asked to focus on social change work, through community organizing or policy advocacy, as well as service provision and community development. While MAAC was eager to do this, partly because it was a return to the historic roots of the agency in community organizing, integrating (or re-integrating) this type of work into their agency was not easy. As one leader shared, "I have deep questions about whether social service agencies can actually do social change, or serve as a vehicle for social change."

UAMAAC emerged out of efforts to organize churches and the African American community in the face of a

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[16] See http://www.onlinecpi.org/.

[17] See http://www.maacproject.org/maac/index.htm.

sharp decline in black political power in San Diego. In the early years the founder, Reverend Williams, who was located in Los Angeles, was starting a statewide effort to bring together black ministries and influence state policy, such as educational funding for ex-offenders. His organization served as UAMAAC's fiscal agent for the first few years. Influencing state policy is clearly a worthy goal and the general approach—building a base with clergy and arguing that work to achieve social justice will also help with congregational development—also squares with many new efforts in the realm of faith-based organizing. However, UAMAAC has faced organizational problems—there were ongoing difficulties of fully handing over power from the original founder to the succession of multiple Executive Directors. According to one observer, changing leadership and their relationship with the board "stunted them from being as successful as they could have been." The organization was able to develop some service provision programs based on their work in CWBH, focusing on efforts to help former prisoners' re-entry into society. Their achievements in these areas, however, were limited by organizational weaknesses.

SDWBH organizations seemed to struggle with fitting the goals of the CWBH initiative smoothly into their own work, and thus into a collaboration. Part of the issue was that the collaborative itself changed before the period under review: the Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) and the San Diego Organizing Project Collaborative (SDOP) both dropped out as the initiative shifted to a service delivery focus in the last several years. This also meant that the collaborative did not have a member with a community-organizing base: CPI, which stepped in when EHC and SDOP left, is essentially an intermediary with ties to community organizers, MAAC has ties with residents in its housing developments but this is more a set of clients than it is a traditional organizing base, and UAMMAC has a base that is both eroding demographically and hard to maintain in the light of its organizational difficulties. Thus, there was no real parallel to, say, SCOPE or CoCo in the San Diego collaborative.

The collaborative members themselves had challenges with unequal assets, experience and power. Before joining the collaborative formally, CPI, a well-established labor organization in San Diego, played a role as a technical assistance provider and this surely set some of the terrain for collaboration when the organization as a partner. MAAC is a powerful and mature organization but it was a relative novice at incorporating social change and community organizing into its social service/community development model. For UAMAAC, the difficulty laid mainly in their limited internal capacity. As a collaborative, SDWBH seemed to struggle with the resulting issues of unequal power and capacity. As one MAAC organizer explained regarding the community benefits
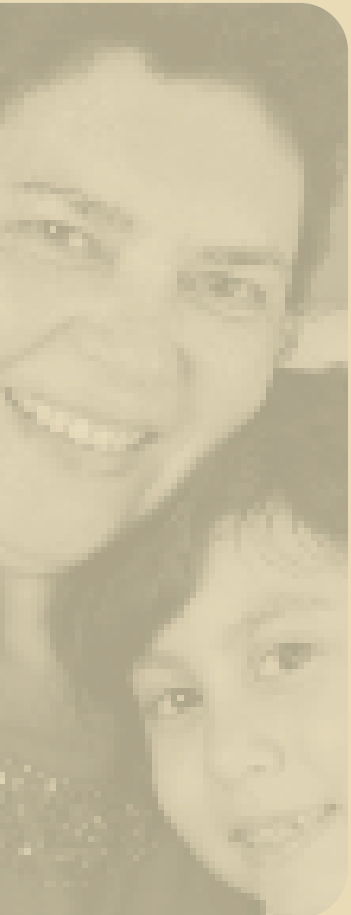
agreement of which the SDWBH organizations were a part, "I'm not sure how much input MAAC brought to the CBA fight. It always comes down to power. We didn't have any."

Despite these issues, all the SDWBH organizations can identify real benefits from collaboration. CPI appreciated having allies in key communities and, while the organization has many partners, it described the CWBH members as special partners; it has made special efforts to include MAAC and UAMAAC in policy tables and sought to broker a relationship between the construction industry and UAMAAC. Given its largely Latino history and base, MAAC has appreciated having a partner in the black community and while it has tensions with labor, it sees CPI as a key ally in pushing policy change. UAMAAC leadership took special efforts to note the strength of their relationships with the others and stressed the importance of simply showing up for each other's events. Still, these are very different organizations and this set the stage for challenges in their collaboration, a topic we take up more in the next chapter.

Sacramento: Sharing Lessons in Programmatic Work

In Sacramento, Asian Resources Inc. (ARI) and the Mutual Assistance Network of Del Paso Heights (MAN) have a very similar vision of social change. That vision is focused on change at an individual level first, followed by work to build towards broader social change—through family, community and neighborhood. ARI is primarily focused on service provision, providing a range of social and employment related services. MAN is primarily a community development corporation focused on a particular neighborhood. But both organizations are involved in work that falls outside of these narrow service provision and CDC categories. MAN isn't just a CDC, as it provides a range of social services as well. ARI, while working throughout the region, also has a focus in the Fruitridge neighborhood and has engaged around economic development issues with local business associations. Both organizations see community organizing as a part of their mandate as well.

ARI and MAN's approaches, however, contrast quite sharply with the Sacramento Valley Organizing Committee's (SVOC), a faith-based organizing affiliate of the Industrial Areas foundation, which was one of the collaborative's original partners. SVOC was a central partner in the initial planning stage of the initiative, and was seen by the foundations as providing an important advocacy and community organizing component of the initiative. Unfortunately, SVOC withdrew at the end of the first two-year phase of the initiative.

The reasons for SVOC's withdrawal had primarily to do with internal conflicts and capacity issues, rather than anything specifically to do with CWBH. They had a change in leadership near the very beginning of the initiative (when experienced IAF organizer Larry Ferlazzo left for personal reasons); there were subsequent disagreements within SVOC about organizational priorities (including the extent to prioritize community organizing versus affordable housing work they were pursuing through an affiliated organization called SVOC-Affordable Housing, and how to relate to another faith-based organizing initiative in the region that is affiliated with PICO, rather than the IAF). These disagreements were complicated by the involvement of higher IAF leadership from outside the region; key leaders left and the organizations eventually dissolved (though were subsequently reborn). In the process of dealing with these internal dynamics, SVOC became increasingly constrained in its ability to organize or mobilize, and thus limited in what it could offer the CWBH collaboration, and ultimately withdrew from the initiative in mutual agreement with The California Endowment.

While the reasons for SVOC's withdrawal had little to do with CWBH itself, in the early days of the initiative, when SVOC was still involved, its relationship with ARI and MAN was somewhat uneasy, due to their very different types of work and visions of change. As one leader put it:

"The types of work [with SVOC] conflicted. Partly it is that, I'm from a social work background, and they are the Saul Alinsky type of organizing. They come in, organize in their particular way and I just couldn't buy it. Having worked in this community, especially with the limited English community, you can't just come in the way they do…. They are very well-meaning…. But I just felt their way of doing things wasn't within the concept of how we would be able to approach people [in our community]."

> *That vision is focused on change at an individual level first, followed by work to build towards broader social change—through family, community and neighborhood.*

Ironically, the tensions with SVOC's approach and the common challenges of trying to work with them in the midst of their organizational decline actually contributed to the strength of the close bond between ARI and MAN, although as a MAN leader explained, "We probably would have bonded anyway, since there were lots of reasons to work together." Yet, as the main community organizing group, SVOC's departure meant that the Sacramento collaborative's ability to fulfill the community organizing aspects of the CWBH initiative's design was limited.
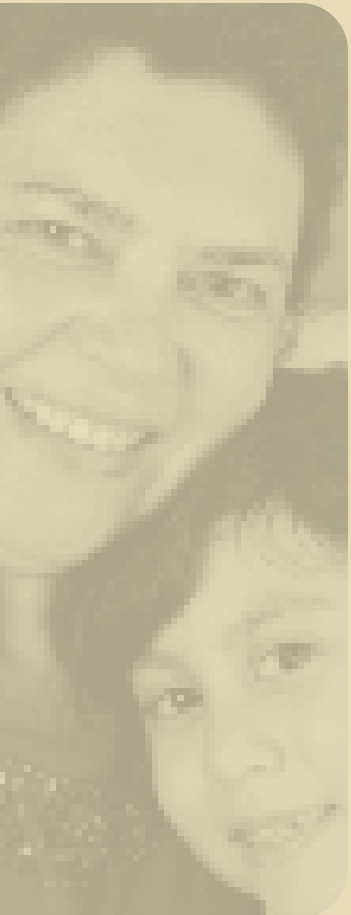
Most of the focus on the Sacramento collaborative, therefore, focused on improving their ongoing employment programs and developing other economic development initiatives.

One community organizing effort pursued through the collaboration began in 2006, when ARI and MAN tried to expand their advocacy work by creating a Policy Advisory Group (PAG). Their goal was to have community residents, rather than staff, take leadership in developing policy initiatives. So each group selected three community residents who had expressed interest, to come together regularly over the course of a year. The group was to first consider a range of possible advocacy issues, select two to focus on, and then develop strategies for pursuing those policy goals. They considered issues as broad as trying to reform MediCal at a state level to broaden eligibility requirements, but settled on two modest initiatives aimed at helping youth in their neighborhoods.

First, they worked to increase young people's awareness of the importance of health insurance by getting the school districts to regularly distribute information to high school students about the importance of getting and keeping health insurance, ways of getting it after graduating, and why accepting lower-paid job with health insurance might be better than a higher paid job without (which the schools agreed to). Second, they sought to improve high schools' assistance to students in getting work in the summer and after graduation, and to create a career center to help students plan earlier, develop resumes and identify job openings (the high school in the ARI neighborhood had a good program, but the program at Grant High School in Del Paso Heights had been cut in previous years).

This policy initiative reflects the approach to community organizing held by both groups; they were focused on careful individual leadership development and largely non-confrontational organizing approaches designed to get community residents into leadership positions in their neighborhood and to make sure the programs of neighborhood institutions serve the needs of residents. Within the CWBH initiative, the groups felt that ARI was classified as the 'service organization,' while MAN was classified as the CDC. But ARI and MAN both grew to somewhat resent the way their organizations were categorized. A leader recalls her frustration saying:

> *"People were treating MAN and ARI as novices in community organizing. We might not do it in the SVOC method, but we have ways of empowering and gaining trust of our community. There are different ways of doing this. You know, we've worked in this community a long time… and I don't think the Alinsky strand works in these neighborhoods."*

ARI and MAN are committed to continuing to work together in partnership even after the CWBH collaborative work ends. Due to the departure of SVOC—or perhaps because of the role they inadvertently played in bonding the other groups—what evolved in Sacramento was a strong partnership of two groups with similar goals, strategies, power and capacities. They also share some similar local funders, both having strong relationships with Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) and Citibank.

Beyond similarities and ability to communicate, the success of this partnership was due in part to the organizations' "clear separate turf;" they served different neighborhoods and they were not competitive for resources, even sharing equally the time of their coordinator. Yet in some ways, the organizations in Sacramento have been little changed by the initiative itself. Both organizations have seen their capacities strengthened over the time of the initiative, and have built new relationships as part of it, including with Legal Services of Northern California, the organization that served first as their 'coach' and later as coordinator. Yet both organizations have continued to pursue programs largely in the same framework and same approach as before the initiative began, and will likely to continue to do so after the initiative closes.

Fresno: Building a Partnership From the Ground Up

In Fresno the FWBH collaborative was able to support their organizations' different missions, increase their internal capacities and integrate the CWBH initiative's goals regarding collaboration.

Each organization was individually transformed as the collaborative was built. For example, the Fresno Center for New Americans is a service-based organization that was able to expand its capacity to meet needs in its community for employment services. Before CWBH they were limited to working only with public aid constituencies because of their funding sources for the work. The CWBH funding enhanced their capacity to offer employment workshops. "We serve clients from Laos, Cambodia, Russia...we have staff who have more abilities, and we can do simultaneous translation within one workshop." Through FWBH, the Fresno Center for New Americans has also started to think more about policy. They are now writing policy briefs and doing voter education through their radio programming and leadership development. They said that "FWBH triggered us to get more involved and supported us in political office work. We now have a Hmong in public office."

Fresno West Economic Development Corporation (FWEDC) describes itself as "a growing community development corporation committed to facilitating economic and social change in West Fresno."[18] Before becoming a partner in the FWBH collaboration, FWEDC was not yet an independent 501(c)3 organization. It has developed from a start-up to an established organization through the CWBH initiative—and the leadership of FWEDC refers to itself as the "poster-child" of the initiative because of how much it has been shaped by the initiative's model and funding.

FWEDC director Keith Kelley talked about the tension between "product and advocacy," saying that balancing the two is sometimes hard. He speaks of finding a "third way," an approach that includes both aspects. As an economic development corporation FWEDC's ability to fulfill the initiative's expectation to do policy advocacy was at times difficult because they needed to maintain positive relationships with public workers and elected officials in order to accomplish their goal of building affordable housing in West Fresno. FWBH's ability to work within the more established political system while maintaining its ability to apply pressure from outside shows the capacity to strike a balance that is necessary in this region.

One by One Leadership describes itself as "a faith-based organization whose mission is to engage people in urban leadership that results in the economic, educational and spiritual transformation of our community."[19] The type of work One by One Leadership does includes both community economic development and community organizing through leadership development. One unique aspect of One by One, also noted below, is that while it is a faith-based organization, it is not associated with the confrontational and organization-building approach typical of Alinsky-style faith-based efforts; this makes it more open to collaboration with other groups and to working quietly and effectively with those who other groups might hold "accountable" in big public meetings, such as political and business leaders.

Originally One by One Leadership was the most established and well funded of the three organizations in the collaborative; however, over time the other two organizations have started to match One by One in terms of size and influence. This relative balance of power, at least over time, has been a structural factor that promotes collaboration. But there seem to have been other elements as well.

FWBH, for example, established a governance structure for itself early in the initiative that was horizontal in nature and was supported by a coordinator who took on a large managerial role. Within

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[18] For more on FWCED see http://www.fwced.com/about.html.

[19] For more on One by One Leadership see http://www.onebyoneleadership.com/.

that structure, the groups generally evenly divided the funding that was provided to them for collaborative work, and when the funding was distributed differently, there was consensus between the groups. The groups also felt like they had "clear separate turf," meaning they were not competitive with one another.

Indeed, in Fresno there was a sense that it was possible to support each other while each meeting their own goals. Working in the same neighborhoods turned out to be an asset, something that bonded them together. The dynamic was described by one collaborative leader: "In a way we are competitors but we each have our own niche... with synergy we use each others' expertise in a good way. When combined, there's a chemistry of success." Each of the organizations had their own approach to the work. FCNA's strength is employment training; FWCED had more links to HUD; and One by One knew more about job referrals. One by One came to the collaborative already a part of the more established policy tables, operating in a more established position. Over time FWCED acted to leverage partnerships adding greater diversity to these tables. And as a collaborative they were able to hold these groups accountable from both the inside and out.

In addition, the FWBH collaborative was able to come together as a unit to successfully engage in policy advocacy. They developed a community leadership development forum housed at Fresno Center for New Americans in order to develop community leaders who can do advocacy work. The success of this effort was apparent to the regional coordinator when the graduates attended the FWBH Summit in September 2006: "To watch them in action was very exciting. They were very articulate. It was clear that they'd been through a training. They are now sitting on different committees and have an understanding of the structures in Fresno. They're thinking at a very high policy level." Each of the FWBH organizations recognized that their ability to accomplish their policy advocacy work was due to the power of their collaboration.

The Fresno organizations also have a shared view around the political nature of Fresno—one that stresses that given the conservative nature of the region, there is little payoff in taking a confrontational approach to create social change. As the coordinator explained, "Sometimes we get accused of not putting it in 'their' face—get them, or it is us against them. But there are other ways to approach an issue. We need to find common ground." This has an interesting impact: since they had to take a collaborative rather than oppositional approach to powerful interests in the region, they also took a collaborative approach to each other. That is, their attitude towards working with leaders and elected officials outside of the collaborative both reflected and reinforced the nature of the relationships within the collaborative—they found common ground.

What is striking is how willing the Fresno groups have been to submerge their organizational identity under the FWBH "brand." Of all the regions, Fresno is the only area where the groups seem known by the collaborative as well as by their individual bases and histories. This may be for three reasons.

First, these were initially less branded organizations. While the Fresno Center had been in place for nearly ten years when the initiative began, it was known mostly for refugee assistance and this was considered a sort of small niche. FWCED was just getting off the ground and being tied into the collaborative and its capacity-building technical assistance was a huge benefit. And One by One is a faith-based organizing effort that is unique in that it is not affiliated with any of the major interfaith federations (PICO, Gamaliel, IAF) but rather with a much smaller network called the Leadership Federation of America. The combination meant that there was less to defend.[20]

Second, in such a conservative region, it was important to unite around a common agenda in order to make any headway at all. If this meant submerging identity to be a bit stronger as a whole, such adjustments were made.

Third, state foundations have often showered attention and dollars on the coastal urban areas where they are based and not on the relatively needy Central Valley. This leaves many groups hungry for resources and perhaps more eager to please: since they are eager to build and maintain ties with foundations, funding for collaboration is more likely to actually yield collaboration.

In any case, the individual character of the organizations meshed well in Fresno and better over time. The collaboration has also been able to deal with changes in the leadership or staffing of the three organizations. As the coordinator suggests, "The dynamics have changed as groups grow. But the structure is set up to deal with this. Now it is kumbaya—no matter who comes in, the structure is set up with each at a level playing field."

Organizations and Collaboration

The initiative's goals were interpreted by the participating organizations differently depending on the nature of their work, and the goals were incorporated into the organizations' broader work with varying degrees of success. This is in part due to the different capacities the groups brought to the collaborative, each playing a key role. For those more established groups, the newer ones were able to push for accountability; for the newer ones, they had the support of the others as they developed. In Los Angeles, the policy and advocacy directive was already key to SCOPE and was successfully taken up by ACJC, ELACC, CoCo and CSC. This enabled the organizations

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[20] Also, some Alinsky-style groups, for example, those in the Industrial Areas Foundation, are not prone to coalitions and collaborative but rather to the building of their own organization. This is not true of One by One.

to improve upon their overall work. SCOPE was also able to expand the nature of its work on the implementation side because of the capacity, partly through CWBH funding, for programming and implementation of its workforce development organizing. As a collaborative, the organizations began to blend because they each had their own areas of expertise, were able to learn from one another, and saw strategic value in the partnerships. But several of the organizations have other coalitions and collaborations that are more central to their overall mission and much of the work done in Los Angeles is "branded" individually in terms of organization rather than collectively as LAWBH.

In San Diego, the disparate power and capacities of the organizations, as well as the mid-course change of who was in and who would lead, meant that a true collaborative was a challenge. For example, CPI came to the collaborative as a natural leader and was able to get the collaborative to important policy tables. At the same time, MAAC and UAAMAC played an equally important role once engaged in the discussion which made for a richer process—and benefited in multiple ways from being there. For example, being able to meet with and work with unions helped UAAMAC be able to negotiate a memorandum of understanding to develop strategies to get ex-offenders into construction jobs.

Sacramento has seen the emergence of partnership of two organizations whose similarities have allowed for a natural bond but whose differences help minimize any competition. The goals of the initiative were successfully incorporated into the nature of the organizations' ongoing work and relationships were strengthened, but the early departure of the main organizing group had an impact in the advocacy arena.

It was in Fresno that meeting the directives of the initiative with regard to creating a successful collaboration seems to have been most apparent. The organizations were each been able to provide enhanced employment services to the constituencies, create successful Neighborhood Employment Resource Centers (NERCs), and develop a solid agenda and strategy for policy advocacy. They saw the benefits of working together and created a governance structure that fostered their relationships.

Overall, the ability of an organization to meet the goals of the initiative depends less on what type of work the organization does, as many different organizations were able to incorporate the goals. Instead, the biggest determinants of success are more about the relationships between the organizations, their relative capacity and power, their respective history with regard to coalitions and collaborations, and whether they saw a clear benefit to collaboration with one another.

Processes of Working Together

Learning about the nature of the individual groups funded by CWBH provides the context for understanding how they were able to work together.

We have seen how different the groups are, each bringing their perspectives, skills and constituencies. Now we turn to the issue that is really at the heart of the report and for which all this institutional, individual and regional context was developed: how did the groups intersect, and what did it take to work together?

Below, we look at the collaborative formation and structure, relationship building, and strategies for working together. In taking us through this territory, we should stress that we are considering the lessons that might be drawn from this particular project, one in which the collaborative did not rise organically but rather was initiated by a specific funding stream. Thus our central driving question here is not what led the collaboratives to be formed, since we know that they came about as a result of a funding stream. Rather, we are really looking to see what it takes to make such a funder-driven collaborative become one that wants to stay together beyond

the funding initiative. At what point, in short, does a "coalition of the billing" become a "coalition of the willing"?

First Introductions

The metaphor of marriage can be used to describe the establishment of the different collaboratives. Marriage can be for love or convenience, and it also can be entered into by two parties acting on their own, or—at least in some cultures and at times in history in perhaps most cultures—it can be arranged by others. Within the CWBH, we might think of the collaboratives as being arranged marriages, with the initial relations being those of convenience and with the funders very much hoping that they would evolve into marriages of love.

Bringing together different organizations that have not worked together can present great opportunities for new synergies, but it can also create challenges (Bartunek, Foster-Fishman, and Keys 1996; Innes et al. 1994). Within the CWBH initiative, as time passed and the groups got to

know each other better, all of the collaboratives moved somewhat along this path from "convenience" and unease to respect and longer-term mutual commitment. But this evolution was uneven, with some of the relationships not moving as far beyond the "arranged" character, several relationships unlikely to survive the ending of collaborative funding, and other relationships blossoming into sustained commitments and a high likelihood of ongoing collaborative work. To what extent does the nature of their communication prior to the "arranged marriage" and the nature of that first introduction help us understand the evolution of the collaboratives over time?

In Sacramento, for example, MAN and ARI already had some knowledge of each others work and some experience working together. They both had previous contact as part of the Federation of Program Operators, a network of employment training providers throughout the region. Thus, before being connected in their collaborative, they already had knowledge of and respect for each other's work. This made working together in the collaboration easy—a natural affinity that was only strengthened through the contrast with the more confrontational organizing style of SVOC, and by their common challenges of working with SVOC in the midst of their organizational problems.

In Los Angeles, CoCo and SCOPE were already allies in various organizing initiatives and this allowed for smooth cooperation between the two; both had already had dealings with ACJC and were trying to reach out to ELACC to expand alliances into East Los Angeles. While not all these relationships were close, Chinatown Service Center was certainly a prominent player in social service arenas, but was a less-well known player in the community organizing circles from which others had emerged. Bringing all five organizations together created a learning experience in terms of styles and methods. At first the imbalance in the relationships was problematic, with one grantee recalling that, "I felt left out of the initial introductions in the beginning. The others seemed to have worked with each other before."

In San Diego, the current partners knew generally of each other but not well, given that each focused on their specific areas related to the labor movement, faith-based organizing and community development. The Environmental Health Coalition, a member of the earlier generation of SDWBH, was quite familiar with CPI, having been involved in similar citywide efforts and statewide alliances—but these two essentially passed one another in the collaborative and tensions between the two emerged over differences in the signature achievement of SDWBH, the negotiation of a Community Benefits Agreement.

In Fresno, the groups also did not all know each other well but came to find commonalities that were strong enough to fortify an authentic collaborative. Part of the eagerness to come together, many have pointed out, is simply the shortage of resources that go to the Central Valley; aware of this, the groups that comprised the collaboration were determined to make the arranged marriage work and develop affection along the way.

Establishing the Collaboratives and Roles

After the initial introductions and enthusiasm of having received both individual organization funding and collaborative support, the groups took on the hard work of having to define themselves as a newly formed collaborative and agree upon a shared direction and agenda. When a collaborative devoted the time upfront to work on governance issues and the structure of collaboration, it seemed to have paid off later by creating greater power and ability to get things done.

How did groups actually establish their working relationships? Initially, each region had a coach to help them navigate the start-up and planning phase. The grantees had the ability to select who they wanted as a coach, though this was seen as a part-time position and the coach remained as an employee of another organization, with funding from the foundations. Eventually, however, the goal was for the collaboratives to evolve to the point where they hired the coordinator directly.

This position of coach/coordinator proved to be a pivotal position for the collaboratives, though the specific role of coordinator varies from at one extreme being the key driver of much of the work, and at the other end, playing more of a backseat supportive role. In one region the coordinator said,

"We never figured out really what coach meant, except that there was quite a lot of herding everybody together, and getting them to work as a team. There was a lot of that. I did that for the first couple of years, through the process of having the groups get to know each other better."

Yet all grantees agreed that having an effective coordinator was valuable for moving the collaborative forward. Over time as the collaboratives developed, the role of the coach/coordinator changed, in some instances becoming more of a manager of the collaborative and in other instances more of a facilitator. The distinctions in the coordinator's role, while sometimes subtle and unspoken, certainly impacted the collaborative dynamics. As one of the coordinators explained: "It is hard because of the dual role, working for the organizations vs. for the foundation. There's also a tension between the coordinator and management role."

In Sacramento, the coordinator's role in some ways became indistinguishable from the collaboration itself. Elaine Abelaye was hired in the beginning of the second phase to be coordinator, replacing Legal Services of Northern California (LRNC) staff attorney Julie Aguilar-Rogado who had been acting as coach. Elaine basically worked part-time for both MAN and ARI, spending part of each week in each organization's office and using that time to both help each individual group move their work forward as well as develop their collaborative work. When she left temporarily, the original coach Julie Aguilar-Rogado was re-hired to help coordinate the initiative, though she remained on staff at LRNC. All three organizations (MAN, ARI, and LRNC) said that the increased connections between LRNC and the two grantees was one of the more valuable and lasting outcomes of the initiative. Once Elaine returned from leave, she was identified to become interim Executive Director (ED) of Asian Resources, and as of this writing is now the permanent ED, which again bodes well for collaboration between the groups in the future.

Grantees seemed to acknowledge the challenges of the coordinator trying to both work for the foundation and for the local grantees, but felt that it was valuable to have the coordinator be separate from the grantees themselves. Partly as a result of this support, in Fresno, the coordinator took on a larger management role for the collective project. Initially there were some difficulties related to the roles of the coach and evaluator. At that point, the coordinator was not local and was also shared with the San Diego collaborative. While some of her skills were quite relevant, building relationships required a local presence and another set of skills. Over time, the collaborative was able to work through the confusion and learned from the experience. Currently the Fresno collaborative is forming a new policy advocacy institute to house a new Executive Director, hired in June 2007. This will be a new entity to manage, along with working closely with the coordinator on the ongoing collaborative activities.

This position of coach/coordinator proved to be a pivotal position for the collaboratives...

In Los Angeles, the role of the coordinator was challenging given the number of organizations and their varying missions, the diffuse and geographically scattered nature of the region and the neighborhood selected for CWBH, and the high levels of skills and experience each organization brought in participating and leading collaboratives. Chinatown Service Center, for example, has developed and led successful collaboratives of social service agencies. SCOPE is well recognized for its ability to develop

broad-based coalitions, such as their L.A. Metropolitan Alliance, made up of community-based and labor organizations. CoCo has been effective at waging campaigns on youth and other issues and ACJC is well known for its role in securing benefits from the Alameda Corridor project. Thus, the coordinator needed to be an experienced hand.

L.A.'s initial coach came to the collaborative from his position at a local community economic development corporation. His knowledge of South Los Angeles as well as the nonprofit sector in Los Angeles provided an important familiarity with organizational culture of the various groups and he helped move the early stages of the collaborative forward. At the end of Phase I, he stepped down and Strategic Development Solutions (SDS) came to the collaborative to the ramp up for Phase II, in mid/late 2003. They were brought to the collaborative through Benetta Johnson (ACJC) who served on the L.A. City WIB with SDS CEO Deborah La Franchi. After SDS crafted a successful Phase II proposal for the collaborative, the LAWBH chose them to be their regional coordinator. The original lead at SDS was Deborah La Franchi, who spearheaded this effort mutually with Haney Mostafah, who gradually became the lead coordinator on the project. Then, two years later, that role moved to Kim La Franchi who currently serves as the coordinator.

SDS brought important strategic planning and workforce development expertise to the collaborative at a critical point in the collaborative's evolution. Yet as the collaborative evolved, the grantees recognized that campaign development and implementation raised the need for an organizing and coalition-building perspective and less need for specifics in workforce development. One grantee noted that lack of grassroots organizing knowledge and experience led to challenges in group facilitation that affected the direction of the collaborative. As the collaborative moves ahead, the role of the coordinator is expected to shift as the steering committee of the collaborative begins to take up more of its own leadership. Given the relatively fragmented nature of the collaborative, the coordinator stepped up to more of a facilitator and liaison role with the foundation. There was some unease with this role and the most recent coordinator's ability to meet the multifaceted needs of the different organizations.

The coordinator role also evolved in San Diego as the collaborative gelled around the Community Benefits Agreement for the Ballpark Village Project. The early coordinator role held by Edward Aparis from 2004-6 was housed at MAAC, and he became a full-time MAAC employee in 2005. Aparis notes that in the early phases of the collaborative, the regional coordinator functioned somewhat as a "bottleneck"

as MAAC, as well as other collaborative members, negotiated how to communicate. Currently, as CPI has taken a more prominent lead with the implementation of the CBA, the current part-time coordinator Richard Lawrence is housed at CPI.

In all four regions, it is clear that the job of a coordinator is a challenging one—perhaps impossibly so. One described it as an "air traffic controller" trying to negotiate and direct foundation staff as well as the collaborative organizations. Ideally the collaboratives seek someone who is knowledgeable about workforce issues, organizing, collaboration and the regional context; they also felt that familiarity with the populations the groups work with and facilitation skills were imperative. This is a hard mix to find in a single individual. Some people suggested that someone within one of the organizations is better, with the advantage of first-hand experience working in the communities. Yet having a collaborative coordinator located in one of the organizations potentially gives that group more access and potential control over the initiative—something to be closely monitored when sharing resources. Other people seemed to appreciate an independent, outside coordinator who could help keep the bigger mission of the collaborative in the forefront. Clearly there is no one size that fits all in terms of the coordinator's role, but whatever role a coordinator plays, there is likely to be some tension

unless the roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and broadly accepted.

The other tension in the coordinator relationship involves having a solid idea of who the coordinator works for. Here, the issue has to do with being an interface to the foundation: while it is clear that foundation dollars pay for the coordinator, what is less clear is whether the coordinators work for the groups or for the foundation, whether they should be translating messages up or mandates down. The answer is both, or course, but the balance is a challenge. One coordinator expressed that the "Groups wanted to talk directly to the foundation but there was an expectation that they needed to talk to and through the coordinator instead." This raises complicated questions. Can the collaboratives through their decision making process simply do away with the coordinator structure?

Besides the issue of coordination, one of the main tasks in the early stages of all the collaboratives was to try to develop a solid governance structure to provide more of an anchor when roles, purpose and decision making got blurry. Establishing processes for decision making and accountability was said to be grueling, requiring countless meetings and discussions. In Fresno, where the collaboration has made some significant headway as a group, all the members referred to the governance structure as absolutely necessary—there were said to be formal, clear lines of

expectations. One Fresno leader described the process: "We've done a pretty decent job of respecting the process, having accountability, and not pushing our own agendas."

But even in Fresno, collaborative members suggest that they often had to fight their way through to get to the decision making. One of the interviewees in another region referred to working in a collaborative as "like individual therapy versus collective therapy," suggesting the coordinator almost played a marriage counselor role of helping different groups work together. Another person talked about how it felt at times like having one leg tied to the others, and how that slowed everything down. One grantee acknowledged that "there are governance structures that look good on paper, and there are structures that have been tested and helped give guidance through difficult times." In some cases, despite extensive efforts to build formal governance structures, there were limited results in terms of having clarity of purpose and process to rely on.

Thus, beyond the formal governance structures, grantees felt it was the collective development of a group understanding of shared goals that was the basis for real collaboration. Finding these common goals and negotiating the various perspectives was obviously a challenge at times, given the diversity of the groups that were funded. One grantee referred to their collaborative

as "an eclectic group...with different cultures...very different missions and goals." Another remarked that "there are times when you don't understand each others' work. There is a need for a clear goal."

To help the groups develop a collective understanding of their work, in preparation for phase two of funding, the foundations asked each collaborative to develop a document articulating their detailed "theory of change" (or TOC) for the goals of their initiative. Many grantees expressed some frustration at having to undertake this process of developing a theory of change, suggesting it was imposed by the foundations in ways that didn't necessarily make sense to them. It didn't help that the technical assistance providers at the time were themselves quite ambivalent about the TOC process, with each claiming that it was beyond their range of expertise. Fortunately, one of the TA providers hired a consultant who helped shore up relationships between groups even as she worked to convince the foundations to provide breathing space and convince the grantees that the TOC was at worst a sort of tollbooth to future resources and at best a way to pull together their strategic planning. As it turns out, the TOC process helped different organizations see how their missions fit together—one grantee referred to the theory of change as a "binding agent" holding the groups together. It was also a bonding experience simply in the fact that it was a bit of a "boot camp" in

planning, and even experiences of frustration can bring groups together. In any case, working through this and other challenges tested the collaboratives and helped them develop their informal relationships. In one of the regions, they integrated developing the governance with identifying and establishing their collective goals. Perhaps this is a practical means of grounding a vision or theory of change into a working collaborative.

Relationship Building Over Time

As significant as articulating shared goals and building collaborative governance structures are, the more informal relationships that underpin the collaboratives are equally significant. Relationships cannot be undervalued, as the quality of these connections fundamentally shapes how much the collaboratives are able to accomplish. Individual relationships, particularly among leadership, but also among program staff, prove to be a good determinant of the level of collaboration. Oftentimes it is the alchemy between individuals that encourages institutional collaboration. Using another spectrum to illustrate the range of collaborative experiences, we find that on one end there are relationships that are based on showing up at events and meetings and sharing information, which is important in itself. However, as relationships deepen on the other end of this spectrum, there are lasting relationships that go beyond specific campaigns or projects and that are based on a long term commitment

to working together. Here we discuss the ingredients for maintaining and building those kinds of relationships, and how they played out in the CWBH initiative.

The most basic element to relationships is communication—frequency and depth. In all the regions, early in the process there were very frequent meetings which were difficult to schedule, did not always have clear agendas, and may not have produced immediate results

... grantees felt it was the collective development of a group understanding of shared goals that was the basis for real collaboration.

other than some frustration. As the collaboratives got clearer in their work, they were able to consolidate meetings to be more effective. For instance, in LAWBH, their steering committee met monthly and there were three committees that also met regularly: case management, targeted industries (TI) and community engagement and advocacy. In mid-2006 case management moved into TI, and then in 2007 TI folded into the steering committee because as they were implementing there was less of a need to have separate meetings. As the collaboratives developed, groups tended to communicate more via email with fewer meetings. In the beginning the

sense was that "it was overkill with all the meetings…you can't be effective." Yet in those regions where the collaboratives took hold, they were able to see in retrospect that it was an important phase to go through, albeit time-consuming and labor intensive. Perhaps the single most important outcome of good communication is trust, as expressed directly by one grantee: "we've created trust over time through open communication."

Communication requires consistent attention and this was perhaps one of the main jobs of the coordinators— scheduling, facilitating and following up from the meetings. This is a pivotal role in the flow of communication, but is sometimes a delicate balance between the necessity of the grantees to talk with each other directly and the difficulty of coordinating the meetings most effectively. As mentioned previously, the coordinators were also in the sometimes awkward position of being a liaison with foundation leadership. While this was a practical way to communicate information from the grantees, the grantees also expressed an interest in more direct contact with the foundation. The negotiations for the individual contracts were directly with the funder, yet the follow-up conversations were more through the coordinators.

These very issues raise an important point: with collaboration comes conflict. And the grantees expressed a level of

"comfort with this discomfort" that showed a mature understanding of what it takes to work collaboratively. One grantee in San Diego said "cranky meetings" are a good sign of people having enough comfort with and respect for each other that they are willing to challenge each other. This sentiment was echoed throughout the state. Another grantee in Sacramento put it this way:

> *"What is great about our partnership: we understood there were a lot of similarities, but also differences—it was OK to have conflicts or not agree. We moved through those things more easily by just bringing things to the table, and recognizing differences and talk openly about some of the differences and intersections, so we can make this work the best as possible for the clients. That was a fantastic way of working together. I was so proud to come through this and work through a real collaborative."*

Not all the collaboratives or all the organizations in the collaboratives were able to work out their differences. In Sacramento, the differences between SVOC and the other two grantees never really got resolved by the time SVOC pulled out of the initiative. In San Diego, as the collaborative began to focus primarily on jobs, it became increasingly difficult for EHC to maintain its own organizational focus on land use, leading it and SDOP to leave the collaborative. The replacement by CPI, although it was familiar to the

other collaborative members due to its role in the San Diego political landscape and its role with technical assistance to the collaborative, still required a resetting of relationships.

Clearly working through differences in mission and approach is in part based on organizational priorities. But the grantees expressed that it was individual relationships that made a major difference in working through these issues, recognizing the need to talk directly with one another as a means of building rapport and respect. Such conversations happened not just in formal meetings of the entire collaborative, but through one-on-one meetings and discussions between individuals committed to working through issues, including times of conflict. Such relationships were also built through participation in other initiatives outside the CWBH efforts. In Los Angeles, the Apollo Alliance included some of the members of CWBH and became another venue for building trust, and in San Diego all the members were a part of the CBA-based ACCORD. In Sacramento, leaders of MAN and ARI knew each other through networks of community-based workforce development organizations in the region. Involvement in the same networks positively complimented the collaborative relationships.

Keeping individual, and thus organizational, relationships going and growing depends on continuity of leadership and staff. This was a problem in some regions, where almost all the staff had changed between the planning and implementation phase of the initiative. These transitions caused a stir and sometimes created challenges for building unity. With high turnover, there are the costs of additional training, but probably more strikingly, there are the human costs of establishing relationships. While there was plenty of staff turnover in the regions, the leadership tended to stay in place. In the early phases, executive directors (EDs) were closely involved with the initiative. In Fresno the relationships between the EDs—described as "key" by one leader—became the glue that bonded the organizations despite staff turnover and differences between the groups. This commitment provided much more than continuity, it brought importance and vision to the work. The experience of the EDs was also important when negotiating proposals and deliverables.

Over time, in some of the organizations, the EDs stepped away from being the primary communicator in the collaborative and program coordinators became the primary point person. This shift represents both a boost in capacity building, and perhaps less attention from the executive director level. It should be noted this was not the case in all the organizations, but was a noticeable adjustment in some of the regions. In other regions, the EDs were said to be greatly invested both in the

collaborative and in their relationships with each other. Those relationships endured throughout CWBH and will continue beyond the initiative.

Strategies for Collaboration

With the initial introductions made, and the early stages of planning, capacity and relationship building under their belts, the collaboratives then moved into the implementation phase of their work. What were the strategies developed in each region and how did these strategies relate to their processes of collaboration? In this section we briefly describe the collective strategies the groups engaged in and discuss some of the lessons they present.

Peer-to-peer support and learning. At perhaps the simplest level, work within the collaboratives involved learning from each others' activities and providing support to each other as peers. In this regard, the diversity within the collaboratives served to create a broader range of skills and knowledge, and the potential for greater collaborative capacity to occur (Bartunek, Foster-Fishman, and Keys 1996; Gray 1985; Gray 1989). Opportunities for learning and exchange took shape in different ways in different regions depending on the mix of partners. In some cases, it involved organizations that were more experienced in particular areas giving assistance to other organizations on their areas of expertise. In Los Angeles,

for instance, SCOPE provided Geographic Information Systems (GIS) training within their region and also statewide. ACJC director Benetta Johnson worked with the collaborative in San Diego, helping share her experience in building community organizations and workforce development in the Alameda Corridor. There was also cross regional work, when Kelley from FWCED traveled to Los Angeles and San Diego for peer-to-peer learning. In other cases, this learning exchange came about through similar organizations sharing ideas and experiences. Thus, in Sacramento, MAN and ARI found that they could learn from each other by simply sharing training curriculum and workforce development materials, saving each other time and learning new approaches in the process.

Our interviews also suggest that the peer-to-peer learning within CWBH helped groups think about their work differently. In some cases, this involved organizations more focused on service delivery learning new ways to incorporate organizing into their work. In other cases, it involved groups focused on organizing to have a closer look at the value of service provision for building trust in a community and for ensuring implementation of agreements won through policy advocacy initiatives. For nearly all organizations, it involved learning new ways to incorporate health issues more centrally into their overall work.

In some cases, the peer-to-peer learning came about by working through conflicts, both external and internal. Los Angeles provides one good example of this. At one point, groups there tried to make inroads with the school district. They met opposition and were unsuccessful, but dealing with the disappointment together provided opportunities to learn from each other. Internally, they had conflict over how to approach the WIB, which was seen as both a potential ally and a potential target to different members of the collaborative. As a result, they decided that leveraging the WIB as a target had to be taken off the table. Yet addressing this internal conflict with each other also provided important learning opportunities—as one grantee said, "the struggle helped us clarify our own thinking."

In some cases, conflict with other actors within the overall initiative, such as the evaluators, coordinators and foundation staff, served as a uniting force for grantees of the collaborative and provided learning opportunities as they worked through different approaches to dealing with these tensions. This echoes a point made earlier about the key role of "cranky meetings": collaborative learning doesn't just take place in an environment of harmony, but can also take place in the context of tension and conflict. It is the process of working together and the relationships that are formed as part of that process that allow for the learning to take place.

Coordination or Partnership?
Some of the collaborative work involved simply supporting each others' work and learning from each other, but the collaboratives also developed more intensive ways of coordinating their efforts and developing shared initiatives.

The diversity within the collaboratives served to create a broader range of skills and knowledge, and the potential for greater collaborative capacity to occur...

These efforts represented a somewhat deeper level of mutual involvement in areas where their ongoing work overlapped or had useful synergies, without necessarily developing entirely new initiatives; as one grantee put it, activities that "really fed into the work and where our organizational development was already underway." In these cases, the CWBH activities were more about continuing the ongoing organizational work, allowing for growth with the additional capacity allowed from working together.

This approach of coordinating related efforts and sharing related initiatives was really the central focus of the Sacramento collaborative, and was made easier by the fact that by the implementation phase, there were only two organizations who could act as partners rather than a more complicated collaborative. In the early

phases of the project, their first real joint effort was to conduct a detailed community survey, involving community residents in the process of documenting employment and health conditions in two neighborhoods that became the central focus of initiative: Del Paso Heights and Fruitridge. The goal of the survey was two-fold: to introduce community residents to the Sacramento Works for Better Health initiative, and to document current conditions and aspirations in the community, which would serve as a baseline for guiding their ongoing work.

The community survey represented a modest collaborative supplement to each organization's ongoing work: broadening their exposure in communities that already had knowledge of their work; validating, through research, knowledge of demographic trends and employment patterns they had suspected through their programmatic activities; identifying some new information that was important for developing their perspectives, such as discovering how large a portion of the resident population was out of the labor force (one-third retired or too young) and thus not interested in work-related efforts; and how few of those employed actually worked in or near the neighborhood. The two groups then took the findings of the survey, developed a common work plan that incorporated outcomes for each organization, and settled down

to tasks of bringing new partners and resources to the table to strengthen their industry-specific employment training and neighborhood focused economic development work. The value of focusing on continuing existing work is reflected through the words of one of their coordinators:

"I saw it as a real strength between MAN and ARI, everything that was done in the program, when we took the Theory of Change and made it real in tasks and activities, there was always the emphasis on the community. It wasn't about… making things look shinier than they really are. For us, it was about looking at what did, what we set out to do, what are our tasks, and what do we need to do to improve our communities."

In working together on very practical programmatic issues that supplemented their ongoing work, MAN and ARI developed a strong working relationship and deep respect for each other's work.

Los Angeles took a somewhat similar approach. In the early years they identified five target industries to work on together and developed training programs. In the phase two they focused on maintaining three industries: health care, banking and entertainment. The three lead agencies for training with the target industries (ACJC, SCOPE, and CSC) each did their part in organizing, recruiting and tracking participants. SCOPE already had programs in health care and entertainment, CSC

created a new area of training in banking and ACJC had existing training in construction and also created a new area of training in international trade. ELACC recruited from its neighborhoods and provided employment case management. The collaborative members had specific targeted outreach to reach their residents for the training programs. This provided valuable grounding and direction for them by giving greater focus and purpose. If the TI efforts were the glue in the first phase of work, the glue of the current phase are the Youth Academies. Starting mid-2006 CoCo leads the effort for pursuing career Youth Academies which focus on the health care and construction.

In the process, one of the new aspects that developed was a greater integration of organizing by groups that hadn't necessarily seen organizing as an integral part of their strategies. For example, the Chinatown Service Center now incorporates organizing as a part of their strategy, particularly through their efforts to create its own Youth Council. ELACC restructured their organization to include an organizing department and they are committed to integrating organizing throughout the organization—including their real estate development—and reflected this commitment by hiring talent that can do exactly this sort of work.

While the groups in Los Angeles had some discussions about broader campaigns, the disparate nature of the organizations involved, in terms of their geography and their organizational focus, the cultural ethnic makeup, and the different industries that they were responsible for, made it difficult to develop common goals around broad advocacy initiatives. LAWBH pursued a different model than the NERC's being pursued in the other regions. They insisted on multiple TIs to provide their constituents employment choices. Instead, the focus on collaborating in programmatic work on sectoral training initiatives provided the basis for them to build relationships and collaborative success.

More recently, however, there does seem to be some common purpose in the Youth and Workforce Development Campaign, an effort to build Career Academies in the Los Angeles Unified School District for both the building trades and health care. This grew out of work that CoCo, SCOPE, and ELACC were already engaged in to insist on curricular reform in the schools to promote paths to college; this was a natural outgrowth focused on also providing another path to gainful employment for those who might not choose college. It also meets the needs of several growing industries. As a collaborative effort, it is more organic—it grows out of past collaborations that were natural—and its evolution reflects knowledge gained

through the LAWBH process although it does not necessarily seem to involve every partner equally.

Developing Joint Events or Campaigns. According to an earlier CWBH report, as early as Phase I the collaborative partners were seeking out intersections of their interests by building community voice and influencing policy:

> *"In Sacramento, the partners were instrumental in convening and mobilizing community members and local CBOs to discuss the implications of a proposed tax revenue sharing bill, which would greatly improve the resources available to low income communities… in Fresno, the partners came together to assist the city in attaining an Empowerment Zone designation, which will create new economic incentives in several of the identified CWBH neighborhoods."[21]*

The collaboratives in Fresno and San Diego also had some areas of ongoing programmatic collaboration, but what distinguishes both of these regions in the CWBH is their success in developing entirely new joint events or achieving significant collaborative victories. In community organizing, everyone will say, you need a victory, no matter how seemingly insignificant, to get and keep people engaged. They will also tell you, that once you attain that victory, it is still just the beginning, since making sure that the win sticks and has impact is sometimes more difficult than the initial

winning itself. Fresno and San Diego were fortunate enough to have visible new success stories and now they are dealing with the oftentimes daunting follow-up.

In Fresno, the collaborative chose to dig into their work together by organizing a major summit. Held in September 2006, the summit was titled: *Worlds Apart, Future's Together: Creating Prosperity and Sharing Opportunity in Fresno.* The conference was prompted by the collaborative's deep concern for the concentrated poverty in their urban core neighborhoods and, as noted earlier, garnered broad public attention because of a Brookings Institution report that ranked Fresno as first among large US cities in terms of concentrated poverty. And the timing of the summit was good as Fresno had a sympathetic Republican mayor (so that this was not just seen as a "liberal" issue) and FWBH had made inroads with the business community so they were able to grab their attention as well.

The premise of the summit was that the income divide was widening, that the resulting concentration of poverty was damaging to the region's economic health, and that a better regional future depended on convening diverse groups for learning and strategizing on how they might align their work on both economic and social challenges. The audience of more than 300 people included local elected officials, heads of public agencies, business leaders,

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[21] California Works for Better Health: Phase II Implementation, October 18, 2002.

community-based activists, students and others. FWBH partners see the summit as a culmination of their work together. From an external vantage point, it brought them to the forefront of public debate giving a voice to the underrepresented neighborhoods they work in. It was described by FWBH leadership as "a powerful tool to get public recognition" of poverty—and it also meant recognition of FWBH as the organization to go to on this issue.

Internally, the event also gave the collaborative confidence—they saw how much they could accomplish and how they could shine light on issues crucial to the groups and the communities they represent. Currently the collaborative is formulating how to keep the momentum from the successful event going. They are exploring a forum series as a part of developing a community plan that will feed into a new Advocacy Center they are forming. Thus, while they had some collaborative programmatic work going, it was really the process of organizing a large new successful event that served to unite the organizations and provide the motivation to continue as a strong partnership together.

In San Diego there was a different kind of success story. In September of 2005, the City Council approved the first Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) in San Diego. The driving force behind this agreement was not the CWBH initiative itself, but a broader coalition called A Community Coalition for Responsible Development (ACCORD) which is made up of 27 labor and community organizations including all the organizations funded in SDWBH initiative. The CBA negotiating committee included CPI, the San Diego Organizing Project (a PICO affiliate), the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, MAAC Project, the United African American Ministerial Action Council, Community Housing Works, Affordable Housing Coalition, the San Diego Labor Council and the San Diego Building and Construction Trades Council. The coalition launched an accountable development campaign that targeted JMI/Lennar, the developers of the Ballpark Village Project near downtown's Petco Park. The project, originally proposed as a massive retail, office

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and residential high-rise complex, "will now [after CBA approval] be built to strict environmental standards, will include more than the usual amount of affordable housing and will provide job training programs for residents of the area. Plus, everyone working in the complex will be guaranteed a living wage."[22]

22 See: http://www.onlinecpi.org/article.php?list=type&type=131 and www.communitybenefits.org

While all the SDWBH collaborative members were a part of the CBA negotiating committee, they were not necessarily identified as SDWBH but rather as ACCORD. It is also not clear how active their involvement will be with the follow-up required to take full benefit of the CBA. Nonetheless, the big single victory has now created a framework for the collaborative to build upon—in the words of one grantee, it is "the loose glue of SDWH." Grantees said it helped allow a maturing process with positive outcomes including service agencies gaining inroads with labor unions. For example, UAAMC met with the apprenticeship coordinators who are the vehicles for linking workers and residents to unions and signed a memorandum of understanding with labor unions to develop a link for ex-offenders to get into union job construction. Thus, the collective organizing and ongoing follow-up work related to the CBA helped provide some cohesion for the SDWBH collaborative, and was the basis for substantial relationship and trust building.

When is Collaboration More Than the Sum of Its Parts?

As the collaborative moves into the final phase of the initiative, we find a somewhat complex story of organizational and social change. In many—though sometimes bumpy ways—the collaboratives have effectively collaborated and built relationships that advance social change, a concept termed "collaborative capacity" (Goodman et al. 1998). But have they become a single sort of entity—a "brand"—by which their collective undertakings are labeled and known?

The literature and theory suggest that the larger the number of collaborators, the thinner the collaboration and hence the lower the likelihood of "branding," but this is not strictly the case here. While it is true that the two Sacramento organizations seem like old and established partners, the Fresno and San Diego experiences vary widely in terms of the depth of the collaboration, with Fresno richer and deeper and San Diego working together but with less of a collective identity, partly because of the reconfiguration of groups in the process. Los Angeles seems to exhibit some of the fragmentation one would expect from a larger group; moreover, structuring the focus of their work on five separate industries across three different sub-regions provided choice and access to more residents but also set up a level of disconnection that had to be overcome. At the same time, the Los Angeles collaborative seems to be more cohesive than one would expect given these structural elements.

In any case, individual organizations did seek to increase their own legitimacy (see Provan and Milward 2001) by branding themselves as part of a regional collaborative or statewide

CWBH initiative. Several grantees did mention that it was useful when leveraging funding; others pointed to specific aspects of their work, like when health care was branded. Still others pointed to the enhanced capacity of individual organizations to further their reach and reputation in the community. This meant that there was an alignment of achieving individual institutional capacity and collaborative capacity.

Yet the regions had different interests around branding strategies. In Los Angeles, there was less interest in this collective branding possibly due to the wealth of coalitions already established there, as well as organizational interest in maintaining a separate identity. In Sacramento, the downsizing of the collaborative to two partners significantly reduced the incentive to brand (or point of branding) collectively—it was easy enough just to describe this as a partnership between two groups. And in San Diego, the more established "brand" was ACCORD, a larger coalitional effort to obtain a community benefits agreement of which the CWBH members were a part.

In Fresno, all the partners felt that collective branding was important— and that the summit sealed their FWBH brand and reinforced their role as an important a player in the region. According to one FWBH partner:

"The City Council knows the collaborative and we have some name recognition. FWBH is part of the city's vocabulary—we have our own voice. We became more recognized when they saw we were able to do some of the work for them—marketing their programs… the summit was a powerful tool to get public recognition."

Even where the collectivity did not establish such a solid and separate identity, the multiyear investment by the foundations did create a context for established, yet disparate, organizations to develop the relationships and shared culture of working together. While it is premature to assess capacity of program implementation, it is clear that increased capacity has occurred in the CWBH collaboratives. There has also been the development of some degree of commitment to each other—as one grantee said:

"We are like a family, we are forced to maintain relationships and like a family we grow… We have shared values and goals and a willingness to stay at the table."

Whether all the organizations will stay at the family table once the funding disappears is another question, one we take up below. Before that, however, we turn to the general lessons about collaboration that the CWBH experience illustrates.
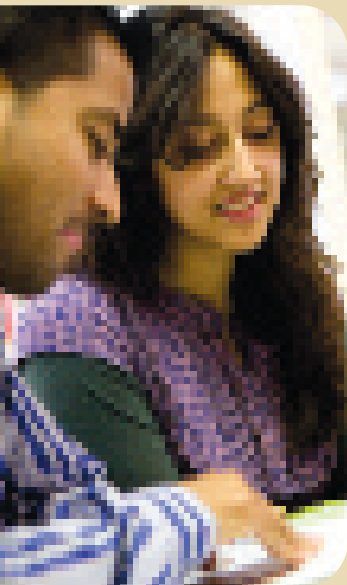
Lessons for the Field

There is much to learn from the "chemistry experiment" that is philanthropic funding of collaboratives. Will the collaboratives gel? Will they combust? Or will there be a synergistic reaction, transforming the collaborative members into a new and more powerful combined entity?

Several factors make this particular initiative especially valuable for examination. For example, while it is relatively rare for a philanthropic foundation to commit to seven years funding for a single initiative, such initiatives are becoming more prevalent, as both the philanthropic and non-profit communities increasingly recognize and appreciate the value of long-term planning in developing effective interventions. This longer time period allows for the evolution and dynamics of a foundation-initiated collaboration to be better understood. Another unique element to be examined is the broad theory of change which allowed for many different types of organizations to be involved. The CWBH initiative has a story to tell about the process of collaboration that funders and practitioners can learn from, and it is here that we use the information collected to draw out some synthesized themes.

The issues we discuss in this section are not exhaustive; rather we chose to highlight those lessons that stood out both across the regions and through comparing the different cases. As a further caveat, recall that our central focus here is on the factors and processes that contribute to building, maintaining, and moving the collaborative—with implications for both moving CWBH forward and for the broader community development, health and workforce fields. There are multiple other facets of the initiative that merit attention, but here we focus on whether the act of collaboration itself sparks something new. We've divided our discussion here into the following seven sections, and it is to these sections we now turn:

- Introductions and Connections: Setting a Good Tone
- Location and Potential: Understanding the Importance of Place
- Relationships and Power: Finding the Optimal Mix

- Conflict and Cooperation: Accepting Tensions, Push-Back and Growth
- Mission Shift and Mission Drift: Making the Best of Changes to the Plan
- Work and Focus: Finding Strategies That Bond and That Matter
- Monitoring and Evaluating: Honoring the Process and Allowing for Chance

Introductions and Connections: Setting a Good Tone

A core concept in the design of CWBH initiative is that successfully improving job access and health outcomes requires bringing together a range of different organizations, including employment service providers, traditional neighborhood-based community development corporations and advocacy groups, all in a regional, explicitly multi-racial context.

From its beginnings, the initiative was driven by the foundations' hypothesis about collaboration; the grantees were asked to incorporate the foundations' theory of change into their own work. The foundations did not have a request for proposals to join the initiative; rather they hand-picked the organizations they wanted to fund. While several of the organizations involved in each region had worked with each other before, few had worked in depth prior to coming together in CWBH.

Why did the groups say yes, even where there was some variance between the strategic goals of the initiative and that of the organizations? On the one hand, rejecting an offer for a substantial amount of funds over a multi-year period is not a decision any of the organizations felt they could or should make; each decided that the objectives matched their own enough to warrant involvement. On the other hand, some of the organizations appreciated the idea of multi-year support, not simply from the point of view of financing their organizations but also because they believed that this was an important new approach in foundation support. Foundations were being criticized for a sort of attention deficit disorder and an unwillingness to stick through the long period it takes to make change.

In this light, it is important to stress that the CWBH organizations had an interest in making the foundations look smart for making this sort of investment, and were very willing to cooperate in a mutual success. But the central point here is that because the organizations were chosen by the foundations, who also crafted the theory of change, the initial tone from the beginning of CWBH was that of a *foundation-driven* collaboration, not one that emerged between organizations.

There are clearly benefits sometimes to foundations taking the lead in developing innovative funding strategies.

Foundations have the unique position of knowing a range of different organizations, and are often able to identify synergies and new trends more quickly than people "in the trenches." Yet foundations also have a certain distance from work on the ground that can lead them to misread community dynamics and underestimate organizational challenges. In the case of the CWBH initiative, having an "arranged marriage"—rather than a more organic relationship that developed out of common work—created challenges.

Artificial relationships between groups are harder to make successful than collaborations that emerge out of a shared set of interests. One grantee observed, "The collaborative brought people together in a non-organic way. It took years to figure out what people brought to the table and what people needed." Another commented that the "coalition building pulled us off mission," because the different agendas of the organizations meant that a great deal of compromise was needed to engage in any collaborative effort. But while this may be an obvious point it is still worth highlighting. While there is value in bringing together unlikely partners, as a great deal of learning can take place, the challenges of building effective and lasting (rather than financially-based) relationships must be recognized in the design and implementation of any such effort.

In managing the interaction between a "top-down" foundation initiative and "bottom-up" community dynamics, there is an especially great need for establishing a tone of open and honest communication, between collaborative members primarily and also between funder and grantee. For some, flexibility slipped into a lack of consistency; for others, foundation feedback was sometimes inconsistent and heavy handed. Some of the confusion was partly due to a lack of clarity about to whom they should be speaking (TA providers versus foundation staff, certain staff within each, etc.). Communication was, some felt, much better and more two-way in the second phase. Indeed, the grantees appreciated the "push-back" they received from the foundation when thinking about collaboration and their own work. Some commented that the foundation played an active role in communicating with grantees on a frequent basis throughout this process, with multiple opportunities for feedback and discussions. This environment of open, frequent communication allowed for a process of continual learning by all parties.

Location and Potential: Understanding the Importance of Place

Chapters 2 and 3 offered a significant number of pages sketching out the regional context. We did not do this simply as a way of providing "local color"—we are convinced that the

regional and local political and economic environment structures what is possible in terms of policy change, in terms of job development and in terms of collaboration.

It is also the case that the effects of the regional context are not linear or completely determinant. We would expect, for example, that where the economy is thriving and business is receptive, a community-based collaboration around work and health can find many partners and collaboration might be easier. A slowing economy, as in San Diego in recent years, can make business less open to community entreaties for more jobs, and this can have negative impacts on the ease of community-based collaborations. But it is also the case that tough times and the absence of leadership from other sectors can create both the need and a void—and the space for collaborations can grow, as in Los Angeles. This is also true to some degree in Fresno, where the need to shift to a non-agricultural base has led to some synergies between economic and workforce development efforts—and helped the collaborative to collaborate because they could see how a unified community voice could find new space in business and other traditional leadership circles.

We would also expect the regional resource base and history of community-based organizations to have some impact. The extremes in this case are Fresno

and Los Angeles. In places like Fresno, where philanthropic dollars are relatively scarce, a funder-driven collaborative will be more welcomed and likely to have greater impact; in places like Los Angeles, where philanthropic resources are more abundant, a funder-driven collaborative is likely to meet more resistance if it does not square with the prior experience and directions of the grantees.

The character and location of neighborhoods matter as well and can either facilitate or hinder collaboration. For example, in Fresno, all the organizations involved in the CWBH target their work in West Fresno. This made it easier for all the organizations to work together, and to engage with regional policy and decision making process from the perspective of bridging from a single large neighborhood to

In places like Fresno, where philanthropic dollars are relatively scarce, a funder-driven collaborative will be more welcomed and likely to have greater impact...

the region. They were also aware, in the words of one leader, that "we know we can't do it alone, we have to work together." In San Diego, their ability to agree on the ballpark neighborhood around the CBA created much-needed coherence to their work together.

In Los Angeles, in contrast, the collaborative involves organizations working in a number of different areas of the city. SCOPE and CoCo organize in South Los Angeles, Chinatown Service Center is limited to Chinatown, ELACC represents East L.A., and ACJC works throughout South Los Angeles. This made it more difficult for the groups to come together. As one CBO leader put it:

> *"We work in very different regions; three in the south, one in the east and one in Chinatown…. They are not three integrated communities. We're not even contiguous. Learning from other collaborative partners was difficult because the issues were not the same across our neighborhoods. There is a tension between the neighborhood and the region and how it is defined."*

Bridging the neighborhoods to the region meant creating new links and new capacities. In the words of one L.A. leader, "The only way we'd win unity is to take on something bigger than we can really do. And if we all focused on a neighborhood project, how would that play out?"

The literature already suggests that there is a significant tension when CBOs try to build from neighborhood work to influence broader regional processes (Pastor et al. 2000). The groups involved in CWBH were therefore bound to feel this tension.

But the special challenge here was finding intersections despite working in different parts of a region, figuring out how a collection of neighborhood efforts added up to more than the sum of its parts. For some groups, this was a bit easier: CPI already defined their work regionally as did SCOPE in Los Angeles, with others varying in their degree of orientation to regionalism. Others became more regional over time —the transformation of MAAC in San Diego as it joined up with the Gamaliel organizing efforts, Justice Overcoming Boundaries, was very significant, and the Fresno organizations have begun to speak for a much broader swath of poor communities in the region. But developing a strong regional presence is a very real challenge likely to face any similar initiative.

In terms of lessons for collaboration, we think the key point here is to avoid abstract models of collaboration and change that are meant to fit into any region, neighborhood or issue area. We should always look for generalities— indeed, that is the point of this assessment and the lessons we draw. But one of those lessons is that seeds take hold best where there is a good match between the eventual plant and the soil and climate.

To some degree, this has been a real strength of CWBH. While sometimes elements of a general theory can apply to all—seen in the way in which

technical assistance was sometimes allocated—the last few years of the initiative have seen a real appreciation for the nuances of each different region and an understanding that success will mean different things in different places.

Relationships and Power: Finding the Optimal Mix

At the core of collaboratives are the relationships between collaborative partners. In some cases, these relationships quickly began to thrive, while others developed more tentatively. What is it about the Fresno case, for example, that enabled this initially arranged collaboration to become meaningful and effective, one seemingly likely to survive after the funding has dried up? And even where the prospects of long-term survival of collaboration seem less secure, participants in all regions list important gains from collaboration. But what factors enabled this to occur?

One factor that made relating easier was when organizations shared common perspectives or were already engaged in similar work. In other cases, when organizations had significantly different perspectives and work, the intersections—and the reasons for even being in the same room—were not as clear. Bringing together diverse organizations was part of the initiative design: this strategy has benefits. For example, with a broad range of interests and many constituencies involved a

group can be more powerful and can be taken more seriously as a representative of a community. In Los Angeles, the partners acknowledged the strength of their differences: "A benefit is the link with other organizations to build capacity. We now have developed links and capacity among us."

But this initiative raises the question of how much diversity in a collaboration is appropriate. There is such a thing as too different, making the collaboration feel forced and false. The diversity of the groups—while intentional and, perhaps, exciting—made finding these shared interests more of a stretch. Some common ground upon which to bond can help to ensure the success of the collaboratives. Other foundation-driven efforts in funding collaborations have had similar outcomes. Chaskin (2005) writes, "By bringing together a wide range of participants with different experiences, different fields of expertise, and different access to information and resources, all around the same table and on "equal footing," categorical thinking was to be challenged and revised, and the collaboratives were to be able to catalyze neighborhood change that was both grounded in the needs and priorities of its residents and connected to the broader systems that have an impact on its operation. But this structure also brought into play a series of tensions regarding representation, role, and the process of decision making" (412).

As Chaskin found—and as we found true in CWBH as well—another ingredient for successful collaborations is a clear decision making process. Each organization needs to have some opportunity for input. Dedicating time and resources to building democratic decision making processes and cultivating a system for sharing power within collaborations is worthwhile for long-term relationships to be sustained.

However, full democracy can be hard—and, in some cases, inappropriate—when trying to move a large campaign. In practice, within collaboratives, each partner brings its own strengths and weaknesses. Some organizations are going to bring more power politically, while others may bring more expertise in delivering services, giving the powerful political organization equal input into service delivery processes (and the strong service organization equal input into political processes). Yet could this end up undermining the effectiveness of the overall collaborative? The challenge is to combine everyone's assets in order to give the collective voice more power. This cannot happen without negotiation and a high level of trust, which depend on all organizations feeling they have appropriate input into collective decisions. At the same time, it may not happen at all if the group bogs down in such negotiations. Balancing power and democratic decision making is a critical (and tricky) aspect of building collaborations.

So how were relationships, power and projects managed by the collaboratives? There are no easy answers, since the locus of power shifted over the years. For example, as the Fresno Center for New Americans got increased funding for immigration projects and Fresno West grew into an established organization, One by One had to adjust to being an equal partner to the other organizations, rather than as the larger, more established group. Fresno West moved from being the start-up group to leading some of the front end work of the collaborative. They drove the effort to get included in the Empowerment Zone efforts and brought in resources. As groups came and went in San Diego and Sacramento, they too had to adapt to the changing configurations of organizations and the power they each carried.

Within a context of shifting capacities and power, it generally seemed to be important to have some type of a leader. When there was a clear and strong leader pursuing collective goals of the collaborative, with other organizations contributing where appropriate, the collaboratives seemed to move forward effectively. When no one stepped forward to take leadership role, the collaboratives floundered.

The evolution of the leadership within the collaboratives varied across the regions and across time. As noted, in Fresno, One by One came into the collaborative as more of a lead agency and as the partners grew into the work,

One by One became one of three partners. In Los Angeles, despite the presence of a few strong organizations, participants report that there was effectively an absence of one group taking the lead. Eventually, CoCo stepped into the position as the focus of the work, youth workforce development, was most closely aligned with their own and was an issue area where they had clear capacity. They may have come to this position somewhat hesitantly; however, a "reluctant" leader maybe better than none and in some ways is more likely to garner the trust of others. In San Diego the groups sought out a policy-oriented organization like CPI to join the collaborative boost this type of capacity. While it is not clear yet how their leadership has played out, they have helped to boost their work into the policy arena. Sacramento, down to two organizations, seems to have experienced a more equal allocation of leadership roles. None of these shifts in leadership role by region could have been predicted at the outset of the initiative; what could have been acknowledged more explicitly is that collaboratives are not always entirely equal in their decision-making, at least in practice.

Sometimes the coach/coordinator took the lead rather than one of the grantee organizations, playing a critical role as meeting facilitator, liaison and provider of technical assistance. Furthermore, having a coordinator in place added capacity to the collaborative while not straining any of the partner organizations. In Sacramento for example, both ARI and MAN commented that they learned a great deal simply from working with Julie Aguilar-Rogado throughout the project, and all three commented that the relationships that were established between LSNC and the two CWBH grantees was a valuable component of the initiative, one that was likely to outlive the funding itself. This experience reflects that experience found in studies of other collaborative efforts, where it

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was found that the role of a coordinator was effective and perceived as a benefit to the work if the coordinator possessed "a combination of expertise and legitimacy unmatched by other participants and offered one mechanism for translating between 'grassroots' and 'resource' perspectives" (Chaskin 2005). It was also noted in that particular study that having a generalist perspective was a valuable skill for a coordinator.

At the same time, if the coordinator drives too much of the work, collaborative members can become more complacent and less committed to the collective goals. In Los Angeles,

the groups became more engaged as they developed their campaign and in the process they have taken on more of the coordination previously taken on by the coordinator.

Conflict and Cooperation: Accepting Tensions, Push-Back and Growth

Often when focusing on collaboration, there is a tendency to emphasize cooperation and the ways that groups found common ground. We understand the temptation—collaboration, after all, conjures up images of working together in a collective spirit—but inter-group conflict can actually signal meaningful collaboration as long as communication processes can transform conflict into productive growth (Johnston, 1997). When groups avoid conflict with one another, it can mean that they are not invested in the relationship—if they were, they would try to work it out. Willingness to be honest and to communicate openly, even when it results in tension and conflict, is a sign of investment in an ongoing partnership—and being willing to talk through these tensions in the context of commitment is critical if groups hope to stay in a collaborative through difficult times.

If some natural affinity for working together exists, it is often later reflected in the ability to work through struggles. As one Fresno leader put it:

"While there have been moments of difficulty, we evolved out of a forced collaboration based on funding; there was a conscious choice here to stay together and this evolved over time. The groups call each other up, involve each other in events and activities, and we did evolve into a true collaborative."

The process also requires time—time to learn about one another and to move through differences. As one leader said in Los Angeles: "We are understanding each others' different capacities and we have grown to understand it more than at the beginning. It was difficult. There were growing pains."

Beyond commitment to building strong relationships, other elements that contribute to effectively managing tensions and conflict include clear governance structures and continuity of staff. When implementing campaigns the lines of responsibility can blur, and when that happens, it's easy to veer off the road. This is where putting in the time early in the process to establish governance and guidelines for working together pays off. In Fresno, challenges in the first two years of the initiative included difficulty scheduling meetings and staff turnover, which meant lots of lost time in training new staff. But enduring the difficulties resulted in a collaboration that now thrives.

In any case, overcoming conflict requires a certain acceptance that conflict is a part of the collaborative process; the

CWBH groups understand this. As mentioned previously, according to one San Diego staff person, "Being cranky isn't all bad. The foundation is essentially funding collaborations that are supposed to engage in conflict around policy, around lifting up populations that are not always seen." This very statement demonstrates a more complicated view of what constitutes a collaborative and its potential for creating internal and external change.

The central lesson we draw then is that funders should not necessarily see conflict—between the groups, between the groups and the funders, etc.—as signs of failure. Yet there is an important difference between simply fighting versus engaging in what so many community organizers label "push-back"—that is, the heartfelt commitment to stay together coupled by a willingness to challenge each other in the spirit of growth. The problem for CWBH is that the first phase seemed to have a lot of tension and less push-back; the recent phase seems to have more healthy engagement, honest conversation, and productive back-and-forth between all the parties.

Mission Shift and Mission Drift: Making the Best of Changes to the Plan

The mission of community organizations inevitably shift over time, as a result of a variety of forces. The challenge lies in implementing change that reflects valuable learning in the context of a strategic direction, rather than simply changing in response to external forces in a haphazard way. This tension is particularly difficult when the external initiative for change comes from a prominent and important source of funding. In this initiative, organizations experienced external pressure from mission change in at least two important ways: the initiative's mission seemed to shift as the foundation's interests and imperatives changed over time, and the grantees shifted their own focus in order to meet the expectations of the funders. How did different groups handle this external pressure, and what did this mean for the collaboratives?

Collaborative planning efforts embody an inherent tension between ideology of local democracy on one hand and adherence to rational-bureaucratic approaches to planning and implementation on the other (Chaskin 2005). Findings from research on Comprehensive Community Initiatives, or CCIs, are instructive to understanding the tensions within this funder established, community-based collaboratives (Chaskin 2005). When The California Endowment and the Rockefeller Foundation launched the initiative in four regions, it put in place a bureaucratic structure that delineated collaborative membership in terms of specified factors, including diversity of constituency. Protocols for planning and communication were articulated through the foundation's decision-making process

and its relationship with consultants assigned to work with grantees in the collaboratives.

Nearly all grantees felt that the foundations' shifts in focus were too frequent, inconsistent and difficult to manage. The first phase of the initiative emphasized planning; subsequent changes in the implementation phases shifted from a policy emphasis to job placement and back to policy. The grantees were able to adapt their work to the changes, but not without difficulty. These changes were more difficult for some organizations. For example, MAAC grappled with the tensions of linking community organizing with community development and social services.

The ambiguity of bureaucracy on the one hand, and community-based and local democratic approaches at the community level on the other meant that CBOs were often shifting to respond to changes in overall funder initiative structure and directive. The degree of these shifts however, varied by organization, much in keeping with the hypotheses laid out in Milofsky (1987). From the perspective of the community organizations in the collaboratives, what mattered most was the need for a consistent voice and consistent set of benchmarks from the funder. The larger, more financially established organizations, and those with veteran leadership such as SCOPE, Chinatown Service Center and Coco in Los Angeles,

CPI in San Diego, and to a lesser extent MAN in Sacramento, often pushed back on bureaucratic shifts, keeping focus on already established goals and strategies. Less experienced leadership and those new to collaboratives and funder initiatives responded to directives from the funders even when they felt it took away from their organizational priorities. As one of those leaders commented, "At the beginning we had a much smaller staff and capacity....At first, I did whatever they asked. The experienced Executive Directors pushed back to make the collaborative work for them and support their existing work. Since then I have learned the discipline of saying no if something isn't authentic."

But there were benefits to the changes in the initiative's focus as it motivated some groups to undertake activities they might have not otherwise prioritized. As one grantee explained, "The funders give a little push back with the policy and organizing work, which was a good thing." For example, CSC, a workforce-centered organization, increasingly saw the value of bringing in an organizing element. The CWBH experience also took CSC into the banking sector where they hadn't focused their efforts previously. The director expresses that they "learned lots practically... though we're still digesting it... it is crystallizing. It helped us to step back from the day to day and see the larger perspective on sectoral training. We stuck our hands into the water. But [we still need to know] will the community benefit?"

While the long term success of these new ventures will take more time to understand, the organizations were driven towards a more multifaceted way of building upon the work they already did well.

In the end the collaboratives were affected by the initiative's mission shifting because it meant that each partner's area of expertise either became more or less important to the new direction of the work. Beyond requiring additional reporting and reframing of proposals and plans, the foundation's changes in focus added to the collaboratives' internal work, such as strategy development, and added extra stress to the collaboratives' internal relationships.

In at least one way, the missions of the collaboratives' partner organizations became more alike through their involvement in CWBH: all became involved in employment work and established (or continued) their Neighborhood Employment Resource Centers (NERC). The mission of just some of the organizations originally included this type of work but as of today—while the actual mission statements may have not changed—the collaboratives are all involved in some form of workforce development and placement.

Thus the benefits and potential dangers of external funder pressure are complex and indeterminate—sometimes resulting

in new directions that end up helping organizations be more effective in their work, and sometimes resulting in mission drift and unproductive new enterprises. Determining the best mix of input from funders and community organizations requires both the willingness and capacity to "push back" from both sides, and the capacity to listen to and learn from the others' perspectives. In other words, it requires a collaborative relationship between funders and

From the perspective of the community organizations in the collaboratives, what mattered most was the need for a consistent voice and consistent set of benchmarks from the funders.

collaboratives themselves—a relationship that can encompass both cooperation and conflict in a context of mutual respect and long-term mutual engagement. Such conditions are rare, give the often unequal power relationships between foundations and grantees, but when they exist, the benefits can be substantial.

Work and Focus: Finding Strategies That Bond and That Matter

We have lifted up the lessons in the *process* of creating the collaboratives and in the *relationships* between the different organizations. But the collaboratives also all pursued different

strategies in their work to improve employment and health outcomes in their regions—and one key question is whether these strategies that actually had the desired effects of securing employment as a means of improving health.

In our view, the time is still too short to assess this fully; moreover, the focus of this particular paper is on collaboration *per se*. To that end, our emphasis here is on the conditions under which strategies are chosen and the implications of those strategies for facilitating collaboration. For example, it is possible that a selected strategy may be effective on its own terms but actually lead to the erosion of consensus, partly if it does not fit all the groups. In the early life of a collaboration, keeping such consensus may be crucial and could affect strategy choice; at the same time, it is important to actually choose a strategy—groups bond when they find something concrete to work on.

Indeed, collaboration for collaboration's sake doesn't go very far. Across all regions, finding shared goals was critical to the collaboratives' success. Once specific projects were developed, the collaboratives took on more significant meaning. Developing specific projects helped because, at least initially, the collaboratives weren't necessarily clear about what they could and should be doing together, so groups tended to focus on continuing their own work

while engaging in discussions with the other groups. Discussions alone, however, don't necessarily build a team—while the drills involved in practice are important, actually playing the game is where teams jell.

This is especially true when the practice drills do not seem particularly relevant to the game. Many interviewees expressed a view that the earlier discussions between groups were based on working with theoretical models that did not necessarily translate into collaborative practice. As one leader put it:

> *"Did [we] tell you we jumped the gun [on developing our theory of change]? We couldn't wait any longer, so we created our own model. The foundations then said we had to pull back and follow this Aspen Institute model. We went through six months of that model, wondering how unlike it was different from what we had been doing. But we had to have it structured on paper in their way."*

From the view of collaboration, is it best if the strategies are wholly new or are they best if they grow out of existing work? For some organizations, the relationships brought by the collaboration were used to strengthen their existing work; in other cases, the relationships help to develop new aspects of their work, either through contact with other organizations or through the foundations' perspectives;

in some cases, one saw whole new large scale collaborative projects, like the Fresno Summit or the Community Benefits Agreement in San Diego. The follow-up presents the challenge of keeping up the momentum. In Fresno, the Advocacy Center that is now being developed is a means of following through on the enthusiasm generated from a successful shared effort.

Upon first examination, it may seem that developing entirely new initiatives and strategies together represents the best strategy for building strong collaborations. For example, the Fresno collaborative is the one most likely to continue as a collaborative once this particular funding has expired, and working on the Summit event helped provide them with a stronger sense of common identity. But there are a variety of factors shaping collaborative outcomes in Fresno, including the locational context reviewed earlier. In San Diego, the commonality of the campaign for the CBA may have been evidence of collaboration, but the process also revealed differences in power, capacity and perspective.

In Sacramento, ARI and MAN did not develop an entirely new initiative that transformed their work, but rather built on their ongoing work and developed incremental new initiatives. As a result, they have not only become stronger and more effective organizations, but have also developed a depth of respect for each other that will carry

through both of their ongoing networking within the Sacramento region. There seems to be a strong likelihood that this partnership will be long-lasting and that is a tribute to the CWBH investment.

In Los Angeles, the groups did work together but it was challenging to find a set of issues that would engage all five of the constituent parts of CWBH. Pursuing the five target industries in Phase I may have dispersed their efforts as a collaborative, though eventually they settled on fewer industries. However, the recent work on youth and workforce development represents an intersection and holds great promise.

Part of the underlying problem in some cases has to do with the mix of community organizing/policy advocacy and direct service delivery. Where the individual organizations are more aligned—in Fresno, all want to do both, and in Sacramento, the bias for both constituent organizations is toward service—there is easier agreement on strategy. In Los Angeles and San Diego, the widely varying range between advocacy and service delivery has led to some challenges on figuring the mix—and seeing how the different parts of the collaborative can fit together.

Still, one of the key lessons is that the collaboratives began to move when they finally settled in on a strategy and could begin to learn by working together. After years of assessment,

capacity-building and preparation, it likely felt like the old adage: "Don't just sit there. Do something." Collaborations need something concrete to work on together in order to create the fertile ground for solidifying the relationships needed to go the long haul together. When the collaboratives were focused on general discussions about missions, governance structures and ideas of collaborative projects, tensions hindered the process of relationship building. Focusing on practical collaborative work—whether sharing programmatic initiatives or developing new events or campaigns—was critical for groups to develop those relationships. In the words of one CWBH grantee, "people don't do capacity in the abstract."

Monitoring and Evaluating: Honoring the Process and Allowing for Chance

Throughout the initiative, there was an understandable interest in being able to document the impact of their investment and to be able to evaluate the outcomes of the interventions in the lives of the constituencies the collaboratives were serving. One of the ways they tried to assess this impact was by having MDRC develop an evaluation process and work with the local grantees to implement it. Much of their focus was on developing procedures for developing a quantitative

analysis of the impact of the initiative, designed to show measurable impact on the populations being served by the collaborative organizations. Such an effort is clearly valuable—as is a related effort by MDRC to develop an assessment of the lessons to be learned from this initiative on the nature of collaborations and lessons for community organizations trying to influence public policy.

Indeed, the challenge in this initiative was that *collaboration* itself was seen as one of the central goals, and a critical component of the foundations' theory of change. How do you measure collaboration? There is no widespread consensus about the best ways of measuring collaboration, though useful tools have been developed.[23] Our analysis in this report follows many of the broad factors that others have identified as being important in shaping the effectiveness of collaborations, including environment, membership characteristics, process, structure, communication, purpose and resources. But what is particularly critical is that evaluations not be designed to reward those who are doing well rather than be seen as a learning tool.

Ideally collaborative performance monitoring and evaluation systems should be designed to help participants themselves understand the effectiveness

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[23] One particularly useful example is Mattessich, Paul, et al. (2004) *Collaboration: What Makes It Work, 2nd Edition* (St. Paul: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation). As we note in the text, the authors identify six broad factors (environment, membership characteristics, process and structure, communication, purpose and resources) shaping the effectiveness of collaborations, that they identified from extensive research on a wide-range of collaborations, primarily in the fields of human service and community development. The Wilder Foundation has also developed a detailed inventory tool that can be used to survey partnership members about their opinions of the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership itself, to give some indicator (based on a Likert scale) of where collaborations are strong and where they are weak. Among others, Borden and Perkins (1999) identified common factors for measuring collaboration: internal communication, external communication, membership, and goal setting, sustainability, evaluation, political climate, resources, catalysts, policies/laws/regulations, history, connectedness, leadership, community development and understanding community.

of their work; build awareness within stakeholders (both within the collaborative and beyond) of the value of collaboration; and help participants set up ongoing systems for continually improving upon their collaborative processes. As one person involved in the initiative explained, "evaluation should be grantee-friendly." Such systems require regular and frequent feedback systems that incorporate both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the collaboration.

It is not easy to set up such effective systems. One of the things that make it particularly difficult is that, as we highlight below, some of the best outcomes of collaborations might not even be part of the original plan. In the end, it is a process, and one that requires time.

Indeed, patience—by funders and grantees—is critical. Collaboratives are based primarily on relationships, and good relationships take time to mature (Mattessich, Monsey, and Close 2001). They require quality communication, respect, continuity, leadership and shared goals and strategies. Given the challenges of putting in place all these things, it is particularly important to have multi-year funding to allow for experimentation and development of effective strategies—this is particularly so for nascent groups (in the classic words of one of the grantees, "all of my resources need resources.") It is also critical to have that funding be flexible enough

to account for changing organizational dynamics and priorities. This was a clear message expressed by all participants in the CWBH: sustained funding allowed them to develop long term plans and stronger, more effective internal and external relationships.

Collaboration, by contrast, can suffer when either all or one party finds itself on a shorter financial leash. Due to variations in the grantees development, the foundation granted uneven funding cycles in which some groups had longer funding commitments than others. As one grantee explained, this created some difficulties: "This structure was disruptive to doing collaborative work. It's important to look at how funders' actions support collaboration, or not." The decision to fund organizations differently reflected the assessment of each group's progress but it also meant that since the partners had different time horizons, they also had different abilities and propensities to commit to the collaboration.

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Long time horizons are also important because campaigns can take multiple years to unfold—and funding is needed throughout the process. One key example

was the DreamWorks campaign in Los Angeles, in which it took many years first to win investments in workforce development programs and even longer for the program (WorkPlace Hollywood) to develop. The situation was similar with the campaign for WIB funding for the HealthCare Careers programs, which was eventually successful. On the flip side, the difficulties of short term funding were evident with the Los Angeles groups.[24] After the implementation phase of the project, the uneven funding cycles of the collaborative members made it more difficult at times to coordinate and align their work.

While multi-year funding is important, it is also valuable to allow for a certain level of flexibility in how that funding is used. That became particularly evident regarding funding for technical assistance. Grantees seem to feel that there may have been too much TA delivered too early, and perhaps not the right kind of TA; in the first phase, the collaboratives were still developing and they felt their attention needed to be inward on relationship-building and not outward on expertise around specific issues. The perspective of foundation staff differed: they suggested that TA was needed simply for organizational strengthening and that the groups might not fully appreciate now how much support was provided, implying that once one has learned something, one can forget the learning process and think that the skills were there all along.

Another issue was that some of the groups in the collaboratives were highly skilled TA providers themselves—and while they might have benefited from TA, their needs and priorities were often different than their collaborative partners. Similarly, other organizations in the collaboratives had specific ideas of the types of TA they wanted that didn't necessarily match the areas of expertise of NEDLC or NCDI, the TA providers involved in the early phases of the collaboratives.

Probably the single most common feedback from grantees was that the TA was best appreciated when it was solicited from the grantees, and when the TA providers selected had local knowledge and a strong understanding of the region (culturally and otherwise), whether actually located in the region or coming from outside (when local expertise was not available). In response to grantee feedback, NEDLC shifted to this more demand-driven model, and in the second phase, foundation leadership reduced the level of TA support and provided more specific TA in areas identified by grantees themselves. When tapped into, the TA helped the grantees, particularly when the timing was in sync with the collaboratives' progress. It is also important to note that the value of TA is not always fully appreciated at the time and can be more valued in retrospect; moreover, the provision of TA is still evolving in the final stages of the initiative in response to grantee needs.

[24] For example, Phase II was originally promised to be for three years. In L.A., ACJC and ELACC were asked to submit a one year proposal and then reapply. After the two years ELACC didn't have to reapply, while ACJC reapplied each year.

Certainly, providing technical assistance and training can be an effective and appropriate way to help organizations build capacity and learn new skills. But TA providers in CWBH were sometimes seen as outsiders with skills that didn't directly meet the needs of organizations. Richard Dana from Mutual Assistance Network described their process in developing appropriate TA:

"CWBH told everyone initially that they needed to do organizational infrastructure building work…I didn't like the people they were bringing in—they may be great people, but they didn't have the capacities in the areas we were seeking…. In the end, I had to intervene, to say that's not the direction we're going. Eventually the foundation staff came back and said give me a plan, and who you're going to do it with, and we'll scrap the existing plan, and you can pay for it out of CWBH funds…I could see avenues we could grow, but we couldn't without better HR systems…. We needed policies and procedures throughout the agency…. [The staff] pushed forward, got us the clearance we needed, and that's what we did with it….We found our own TA…. It was spectacular eventually."

Still, even as some groups took their time to find their niche in the health or employment work and to adapt to the changing directions of the initiative, they eventually engaged in their own institutional transformations in directions that had been foreseen by CWBH planners. For instance, ELACC took years to find the best way to integrate its community organizing work—once it found a place, it helped to fundamentally change the organization and its approach to community development. Health has also become a priority. In the words of one ELACC leader, "the health language has been infused in our work and even their community development work has been reframed in terms of 'building healthy communities'," replete with a focus on green building and sustainability.

CWBH was said to add credibility for leveraging change within organizations. According to one MAAC leader, "We found that CWBH provided some legitimacy to take questions and directive to the Board." CWBH organizations were also able to use collaborative support to acquire other funding; as one leader said, with CWBH "we did get visibility in the funding world." Finally, CWBH also allowed individual organizations to move their own priorities in the policy world—the "blessings of the other families" added legitimacy in all the regions.

Finally, both foundation planners and evaluators need to (and often do) recognize an important fact: In any initiative, plenty can go wrong by accident; what is equally interesting is what goes right by accident.

Indeed, some of the most interesting outcomes of CWBH may not have been fully anticipated. CWBH was the impetus in many cases for new and unexpected relationships between the collaboratives and other regional actors. While there is a tendency to focus on the relationships that were established *within* the collaboratives, part of a collaboratives' success involved relationships that were forged outside the groups. Indeed, one assessment of capacity would be whether collaboratives are able to develop and transfer collaborative skills and relationships to other relationships and work outside of the collaborative (Mulroy and Shay, 1998).

In San Diego, an exciting result of MAAC's increased interest in organizing was joining the Gamaliel network. In Los Angeles, ELACC has jumped into a burgeoning effort to redo L.A.'s Community Plans, an effort in which CoCo is also involved. In Fresno, FWBH has developed positive relationships with the mayor, council members and regional business leaders. Some relationships across regions were also built. Organizers from San Diego visited ACJC in Los Angeles to learn more about their work. SCOPE intends to meet with UAMACC in San Diego and with others to discuss Workforce Investment Board work.

Finally, stronger partnerships between two organizations within a broader collaborative may be as important as the collaborative as a whole. In the words of a grantee: "There is a range of collaboration, from partnerships to full cooperation on a campaign." ELACC and SCOPE established a bond as partners that will likely endure. Asian Resources and MAN are now committed partners even as the collaborative element of their involvement in CWBH has ended.

Our basic point is that the metrics of measuring the success of collaboration may need to go beyond the goals that were originally laid out, and consider the ripple effects both within organizations and within their regions. Engagement with others doing organizing or service delivery can trigger shifts in one's own organizational mix. More importantly, what is learned from one collaboration— good and bad—can inform another collaboration and thereby make for better or worse partnership styles that individual collaborative members take into new coalitions. It can feed into a broader regional dialogue and the skills learned, like those about the integration of health, work and neighborhood, are gifts that might just keep giving.
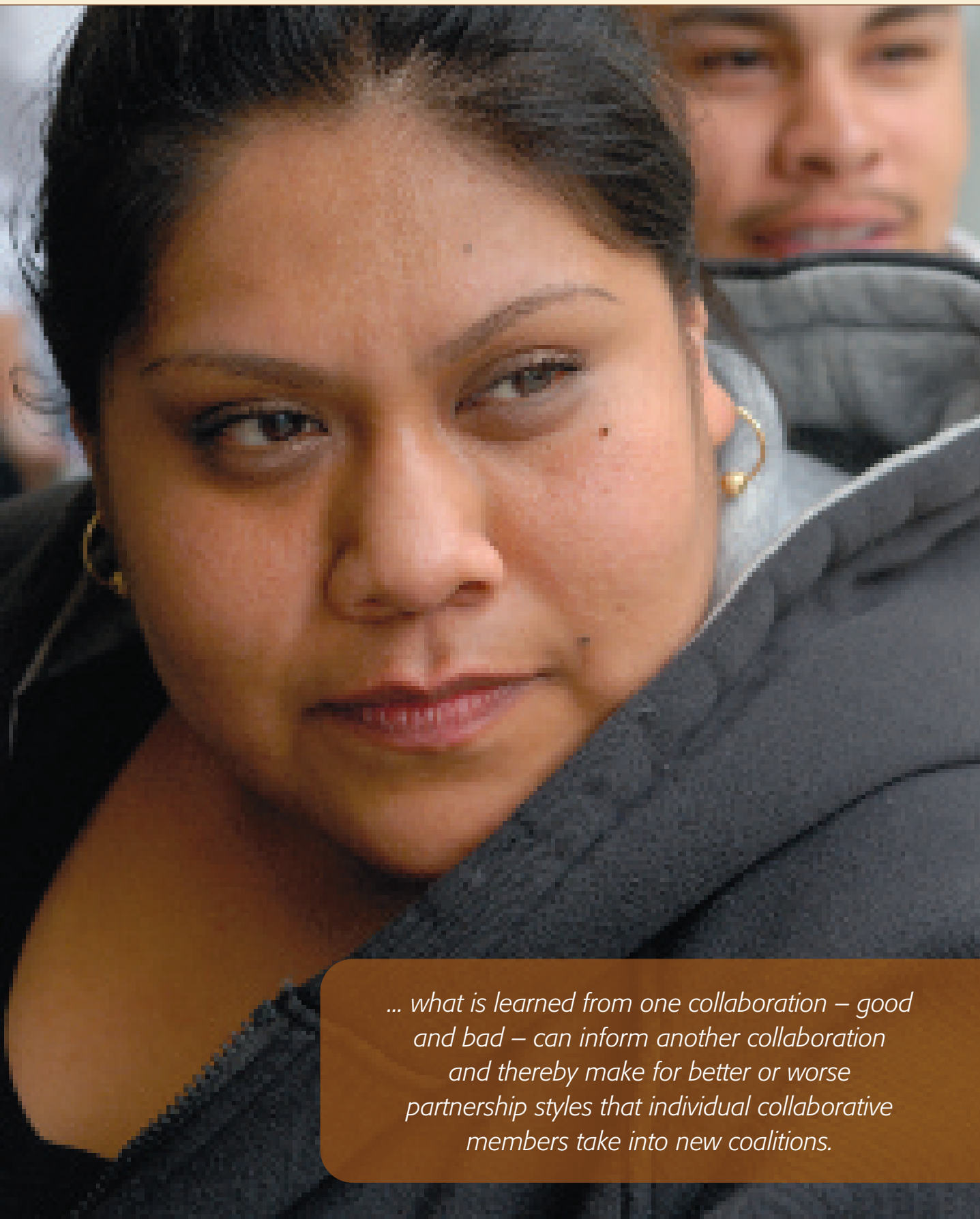
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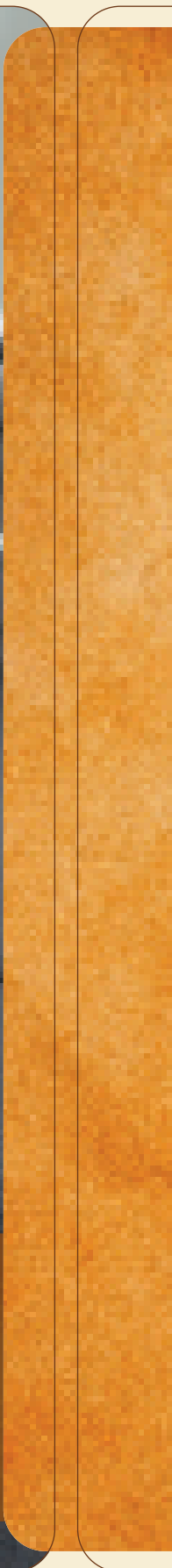
Standing Back, Looking Forward

Exploring collaboration is like looking at a spider's web; there is the center of the web, many individual strands that make up the web, and the sum of the web is an intricate whole.

In this sense, CWBH is no different than other such collaborative: we have seen how the whole can be supported by a strong core coordinator or campaign, how there are intersecting strands within collaboratives that are independent but connected, and how the whole can be beautiful in concept and strong in practice, but also highly fragile if not tended to.

What may be different about CWBH is its sheer ambition and complexity. There have been many attempts to build and sustain collaborative efforts, particularly within a single sector or geographic area. But CWBH's insistence on crossing sectors, ethnicities, types of organizations and geographies was bold; its emphasis on linking work and health in new ways was innovative; and its stress on developing multiple capacities in policy analysis, organizing and job placement was cutting-edge. The multiple moving parts, all at the forefront of new theory and practices, makes any analysis focused just on the collaborative portion

difficult—and we realize that we have not spent enough time with the various actors to be as definitive in our conclusions as we might be. Even if we had, disentangling, understanding and fully honoring the accomplishments and shortfalls in each area would have been a challenge.

This report nonetheless tries to take up that task. We found that, despite a somewhat complicated conception, all grantees identified positive outcomes that resulted from their involvement in the initiative and their interactions with The California Endowment (and the Rockefeller Foundation in the earlier years). Through the initiative, grantees were able to incorporate new programs focused on health disparities, build a greater understanding of regional dynamics and processes, reach out to new partners and extend their policy-change capacities. Requiring groups to work across the work, health and policy arenas has helped groups integrate and interconnect their own internal

services. Grantees consistently mentioned cross-referral both within and across organizations as a huge benefit.

Groups have also been able to gain capacity and institutionalize new programs. The Fresno Center for New Americans, for example, has moved from a focus on settlement housing and services to a more self-sustaining model that goes beyond services, partly because they were provided with the resources to invest in a healthy dose of organizational strategic planning. In Los Angeles, the relationship between SCOPE and ELACC, built through CWBH, helped SCOPE actually implement in targeted communities the Workplace Hollywood employment program that they had fought for (and won) in their campaign for community benefits from the proposed DreamWorks development. In Sacramento, the Mutual Assistance Network grew significantly during the project, with important organizational development and technical assistance provided by the CWBH funding, which significantly strengthened their economic development focus to complement their family assistance work.

Framing the Assessment, Complicating the Story

While much of the above is positive, there were also uneven outcomes. As Foster-Fishman, et al. (2001) argue, successful collaboratives function with core competencies and processes at

four levels: 1) within members; 2) within their relationships; 3) within their organizational structure and 4) within the programs they sponsor. By this standard, the capabilities of CWBH groups have been improved and programs have been enhanced. Some regions, however, have exhibited more relationship-building than others, and the base for continued success is uneven. Most striking has been the willingness in only one of the locations, Fresno, to essentially "brand" the collaborative activities as collaborative activities, taking the risk that focusing on the sum of the parts will eventually lift up the parts themselves.

Mattessich et al. (2001) suggests that factors of success in collaborative-building can be categorized into six useful analytical categories. The first, as covered in Part 2 and 3, are factors of "General Environment," characteristics that relate to the historical context from which organizations come to collaborative efforts. The second category is "Membership," and involves whether where participants are clear in their self-interest, committed to developing mutual respect and willing to compromise. Third are characteristics of "Structure and Process," especially the degree that the partners "buy into" to the group.[25] Fourth are factors of "Communication," with the common sense idea that improved communication will help working together. Fifth come factors related to group "Purpose," with

[25] See also Gray 1985; Innes et al. 1994.

the notion being that collaboration depends on a clear, realistic and shared group goal, with some actions that are immediate and do-able. Finally, Mattessich et al. suggest that we examine "Resources" recognizing of course that successful collaboratives require resources, not only financial, but of leadership.

Along these dimensions, the one that may be the least controversial is resources: while grantees will always feel that they are being stretched, in general the foundations provided the funds necessary to have a good go of it. There also seems to have been a good sense of the environment. Before undertaking CWBH, the foundations had done a regional scan and realized that the goals and strategies would differ by context—and the collaboratives did indeed demonstrate different styles that fit the economics and politics of their specific region. The more forceful approach of the Los Angeles groups would not have played well in Fresno; the cooperative tone of the Sacramento groups fit, but the San Diego organizations needed to show their willingness to engage local authorities on key public policy issues.

On the other four categories— membership, structure, communication and purpose—the story is a bit more mixed. The groups that were asked to be part of the collaboratives were varied and such diversity was both a strength and a challenge. The structure was

somewhat unclear at the beginning and this led to confusion over accountability and technical assistance. Communication was two-way, including a useful albeit frustrating period in which the groups developed their own theory of change; while sometimes bumpy, the foundation-organization relationship seemed to reflect Chaskin's study of comprehensive community initiatives in which he writes: "The most successful negotiation of the complexities of intent and organization occurred where community foundations were less risk averse, more flexible, and more inclined to open negotiation with the collaborative" (2005). The Endowment, in short, adjusted, the groups did as well, and the last several years have represented a period of higher performance on the part of virtually all actors.

As for purpose, we have noted above that the original purpose of CWBH was multiple—develop organizational capacity, learn to collaborative effectively, place individuals in jobs, engage in community organizing, recommend and pursue regional policies, and make the connection of all this to health outcomes. It is a lot—and it was always likely to be a bit more than many of the organizations could get a grip on. As time went on and goals got more concrete—achieve a community benefits agreement, shift the geographic locus of ongoing job training, develop a collaboration with regional business, work in local schools to catch youth early—the immediacy and tangible

character of the projects led to a better and more effective set of working relationships.

The question may be: Could the groups have gotten there without the preliminaries? We think not. As we have stressed all along, time spent coming together is time invested in staying together. There may have economies that could have been achieved along the way, but the process is always likely to take longer than funders, organizations and outside observers—particularly with the benefit of hindsight—might hypothesize.

One critical test of collaborative success is whether the partnerships forged are likely to last past the period of funding. In Los Angeles, for example, several of the organizations are likely to continue to work together in individual partnerships but probably not as a group of five. In Sacramento, the two organizations will likely continue to share ideas and perspectives, though without a formal partnership. In San Diego, the future of the underlying relationships is, at least at this point, tentative although they are likely to find points of intersection in the future. Fresno is most likely to survive as a collaborative as they are well-known in their region as a collaborative, with the name FWBH recognized by others; they are in the process of developing a FWBH nonprofit organization that is focused on shaping public policy in their region.

One way to think about this is to classify ties between the groups into three categories—relationships, special relationships, and strategic relationships. The first of these sorts of relationships can be arms-length—the sort of thinness of most coalitions—while the second suggests a much higher degree of inclusion, care and concern. The last of these is most long-lasting—strategic relationships are those where one organization recognized that its very survival depends on the health of another group and it is committed to insuring that happens.

One critical test of collaborative success is whether the partnerships forged are likely to last past the period of funding.

CWBH has involved relationships that range between special and strategic, often within the same geographic collaborative. The mix is not unexpected—just because a project intends for relationships to be strategic does not mean that they all will be. It is not clear that continuing the collaboratives was the end-all—but to the extent that it was, the assessment here of the long term endurance of the collaboratives is as diverse as the collaboratives themselves.

Lessons for Philanthropy

What are the take-aways of our analysis for the field, particularly for philanthropies that might be considering such collaborative investments in the future? For us, these include:

(1) Build and design a collaborative from the ground up. Trying to create collaboratives between organizations that do not have previous relationships, based on theoretical models of change not rooted in particular regions, presents challenges. While there may be good reasons to do so, there are also opportunities to expand existing work, building on either existing relationships or nascent acquaintances based on already- perceived synergies. Organizing collaboratives where there are existing relationships helps provide sort of a running start for the collaborative work. As one CWBH grantee remarked, "A natural process for selecting partners is needed."

(2) Understand the context. Funders can bring valuable outside perspectives to regional collaborations, but this must be complementary to understanding the local and regional context. This can involve data analysis to inform what is possible in terms of potential collaboration; funders also need to assess existing networks, identify pre-existing relationships and work with potential collaborative members in the early design stages of collaborative initiatives.

(3) Take the time to find common ground. Devoting time to governance structures and relationship building is necessary. The shared experience of co-design and coexistence creates a road map for working together and finding shared goals. Having a shared or complementary geography may facilitate the process by reducing the competition for limited resources but coming together with common languages, strategies and projects is always possible if there is goodwill and vision.

(4) One size does not fit all. Partnerships can range from aligning efforts to coordinating activities to fully collaborating on goals and strategies. All require effort and all have their benefits. Getting the third of these possibilities, where relationships are deep and trust is high, will most likely take longer than expected and may not be the model for all coalitional efforts. It is also the case that groups make different contributions at different times to the process—some bring early capacities that are quickly utilized, others blossom later or find their skills at a higher premium. Not every group has to mirror the set of capabilities that one expects to characterize the collaborative; the point is to combine capacities.

(5) Understand conflict as part of the process. Collaboration tends to conjure up images of harmonious interactions. But when relationships are well developed, there is room to challenge each other and that will take the work further. To repeat the words of a regional coordinator from a previous chapter:

> *"What is great about our partnership is that we understood there were a lot of similarities, but also differences—it was OK to have conflicts or not agree. We moved through those things more easily by just bringing things to the table, recognizing differences, and talking openly about some of the differences and intersections, so we can make this work the best as possible for the clients. That was a fantastic way of working together."*

Conflict is a healthy part of the collaborative process, and its absence may actually indicate more superficial partnerships. "Push-back" from the grantees can actually enhance project design—and when social change is on the giving agenda, some degree of conflict with other organizations and leaders is to be expected.

(6) Keep the design simple and the expectations clear. The very factor of collaboration takes energy; nesting this in an overly complex theory of change can be overwhelming. This is especially true if the emphasis of the work shifts over time as the theory itself is worked out. The measurement of impacts is important but the expectations for grantees should be clear. At the same time, evaluators, funders and others need to broaden their perspective of what counts: qualitative changes—in organization capacity (to collaborate) or shifts in mission—are often the most important, and unexpected changes in collaborative organizations might have the longest afterlife.

(7) Stay the course and find the balance. A rigid program design with an emphasis on outcomes probably will not work. Flexibility is absolutely necessary in long term projects, but it is important to balance mid-course corrections with the need to stay the course and provide collaboratives with the vision and stability they need to stay on track. It will involve frustration—change often only looks good at the end. Sticking with it, both by collaborative partners and by funders, is key. There is no such thing as a cookie cutter approach in this business—circumstances will change depending on the political and economic environments and this will affect how groups can collaborate. It is through these time consuming and sometimes difficult processes that authentic relationships can form.
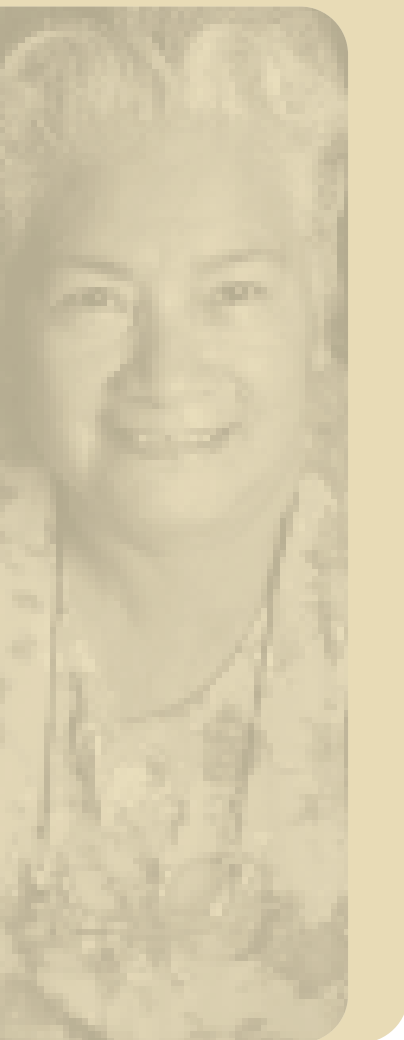
A Final Thought

We would add that staying the course also means understanding the need for more efforts similar to the CWBH initiative. After plowing through the previous pages of deconstruction, this finding might surprise the reader—and to some extent, it surprises even us. After all, we went into this assessment aware of many of the tensions, conflicts and challenges that had been part of this initiative from its early days, and determined, like any good group of researchers, to highlight the high points, look for the weak links and point to the areas for improvement.

Yet the natural analytical focus may have tended to downplay the fact that certain aspects of this initiative are all too rare in the community development field at the moment, and including them in future investments could be tremendously valuable. These include: collaborative funding with a commitment to long-term support; ambitious goals that move beyond the well-trod ground of traditional community development; efforts to build new collaborations that cross constituencies, types of organizations (e.g., service/organizing/community development) and fields of work (e.g., work and health); and the acknowledgement that initiatives should try to build regional perspectives and understand sources of power if they are to actually change policy and impact outcomes.

At times, the execution of this complex theory of change may have been uneven and this is realistically to be expected. But the hope and vision that it embodies are crucial, the relationships that it has prompted are invaluable, and the prospects for new policy and practice in all the various regions are impressive. Collaboration is certainly as much art as science: unexpected events, magic moments of creation, and inspired and inspiring outcomes are all part of the picture. Analysts naturally bring the scientific prism to the project, looking for how a certain experience may fit into the literature and theory.

Spending time with the groups on the ground—seeing the deepening trust between leaders, the willingness of groups to work together, and the honest exchange about problems that has helped inform our research—makes it clear why one grantee commented: "This collaborative serves as a model for us to learn how to collaborate and network with others in the region…The CWBH theory and model may serve as an example in the future for others." We hope that is the case and trust that this report will be a useful part of the record that will encourage learning by both those involved in and those outside the CWBH process.
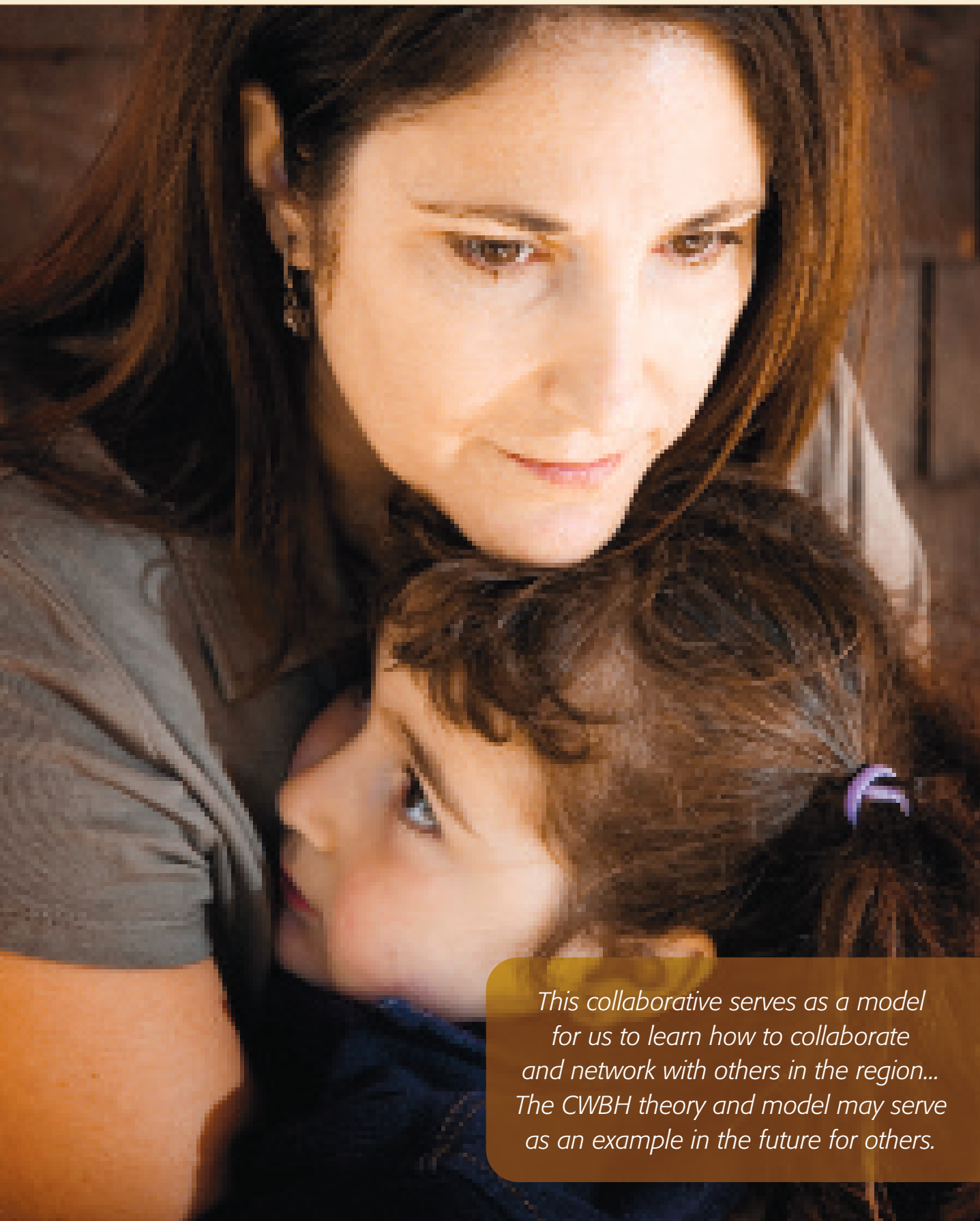
This collaborative serves as a model for us to learn how to collaborate and network with others in the region... The CWBH theory and model may serve as an example in the future for others.
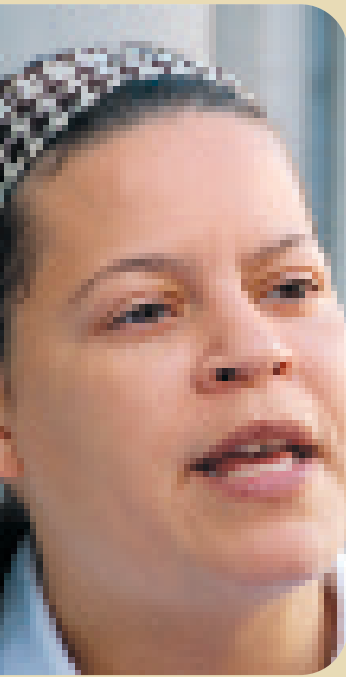
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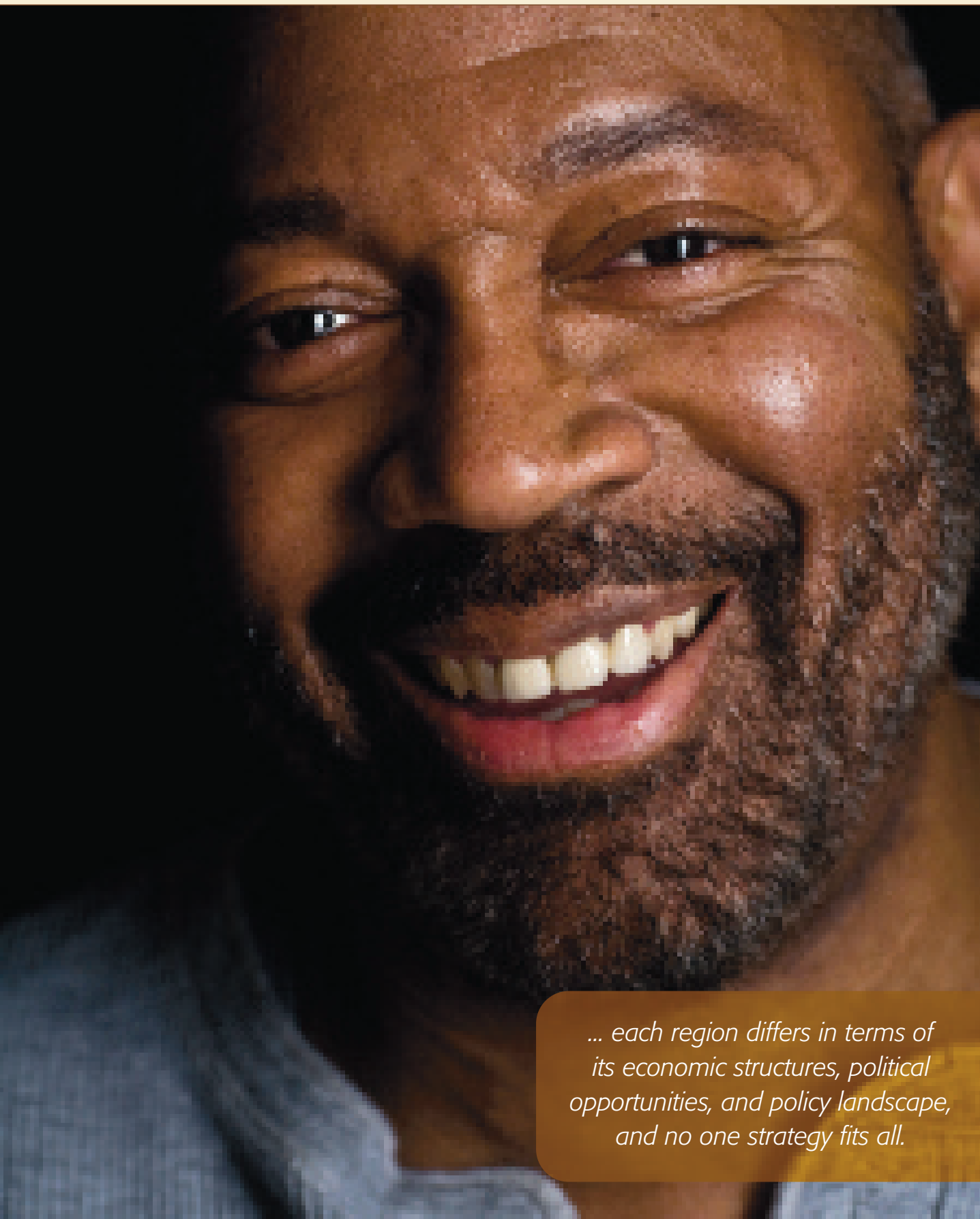
... each region differs in terms of its economic structures, political opportunities, and policy landscape, and no one strategy fits all.
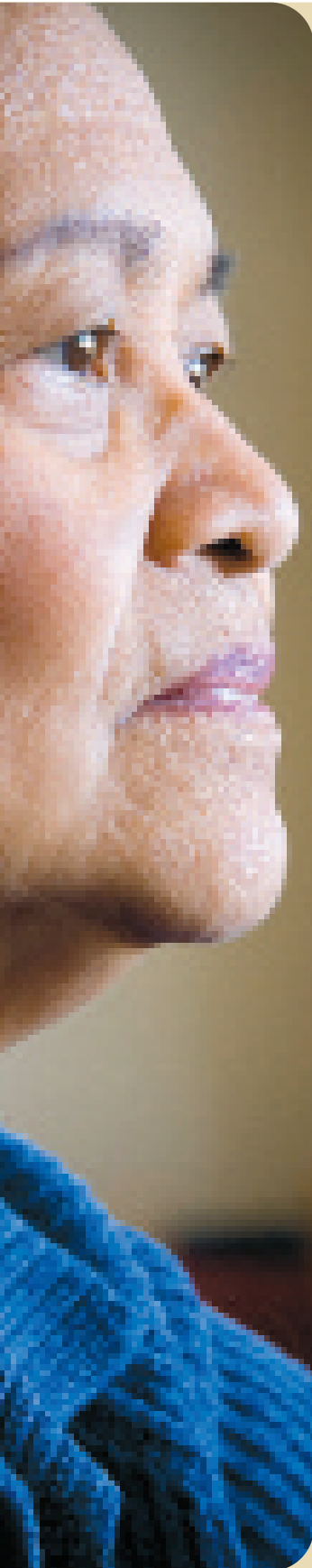
Appendices

Appendix I: Interviews

Fresno Diego Site Visit:
Fresno West Center for Economic Development *February 12, 2007*
- Daniel Guerra, *FWCED*
- Keith Kelly, *FWCED*

Fresno Center for New Americans *February 12, 2007*
- Silas Cha
- Andrew Xiong
- Hue Jeff Xiong

One By One *February 15, 2007*
- Gwen Morris

Veda Ramsay Stamps, The Ramsay Group *(Regional Coordinator)* *February 12, 2007*

Los Angeles Site Visit:
SCOPE: *March 29, 2007*
- Jennifer Ito
- Karla Zombro
- Anthony Thigpenn

East LA Community Corporation *March 23, 2007*
- Isela Gracian
- Maria Cabildo

Chinatown Service Center *March 23, 2007*
- Larry Lue
- Dennis Arguelles *(though no longer there; he's moved on to Search to Involve Philipino Americans)*
- David Dinh

Alameda Corridor Jobs Coalition: *March 23, 2007*
- Bennetta Johnson

Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (CoCo) *April 10, 2007*
- Marqueece Harris-Dawson
- Alberto Retana

Kim LaFranchi, Strategic Development Solutions *(Regional Coordinator)* *May 22, 2007*

Sacramento Site Visit:
Asian Resources Inc. *March 2, 2007*
- Elaine Abelaye
- May Lee

MAN *March 1, 2007*
- Richard Dana
- Carolyn Washington

Julie Aguilar-Rogado, LSNC *(Regional Coordinator, Sacramento)* *March 2, 2007*

San Diego Site Visit:
All conducted *February 2, 2007*
CPI
- Donald Cohen
- Barbara Hall

MAAC
- Paul Hernandez
- Judy Harper, *formerly of MAAC*

UAAMAC
- Robert Tambuzi, United African American Ministerial Action Council (UAAMAC)
- Reverend Ard, United African American Ministerial Action Council (UAAMAC)

Richard Lawrence *(current Regional Coordinator)*

Edward Aparis *(former Regional Coordinator)*

Other interviewees:

Earl Johnson, *The California Endowment*

Deborah Whittle, *CWBH consultant*

Craig Howard, *MDRC*

Darren Walker, *Rockefeller Foundation*

Martha Jimenez, *former lead program officer, CWBH*

Omowale Satterwhite, *NCDI*

Shiree Tang, *TAI consultant*

Appendix II: Future Employment Trends

Collaborative possibilities are affected by the past but they are also affected by prospects for the future; if things are looking up, groups might consider focusing on growing industries. To help with thinking through economic futures, we include the projections of the state's employment opportunities by educational requirements. To get this, we took the state's projections by region by occupation, calculated the educational requirements for each job, and summed up over the region. The results are depicted in **Figure A.1**.

There are several trends worth noting that will structure future collaborative work. One is that in all our regions, the demand for highly educated workers is either at or well below (Fresno) the state average. Conversely, there is healthy demand throughout these
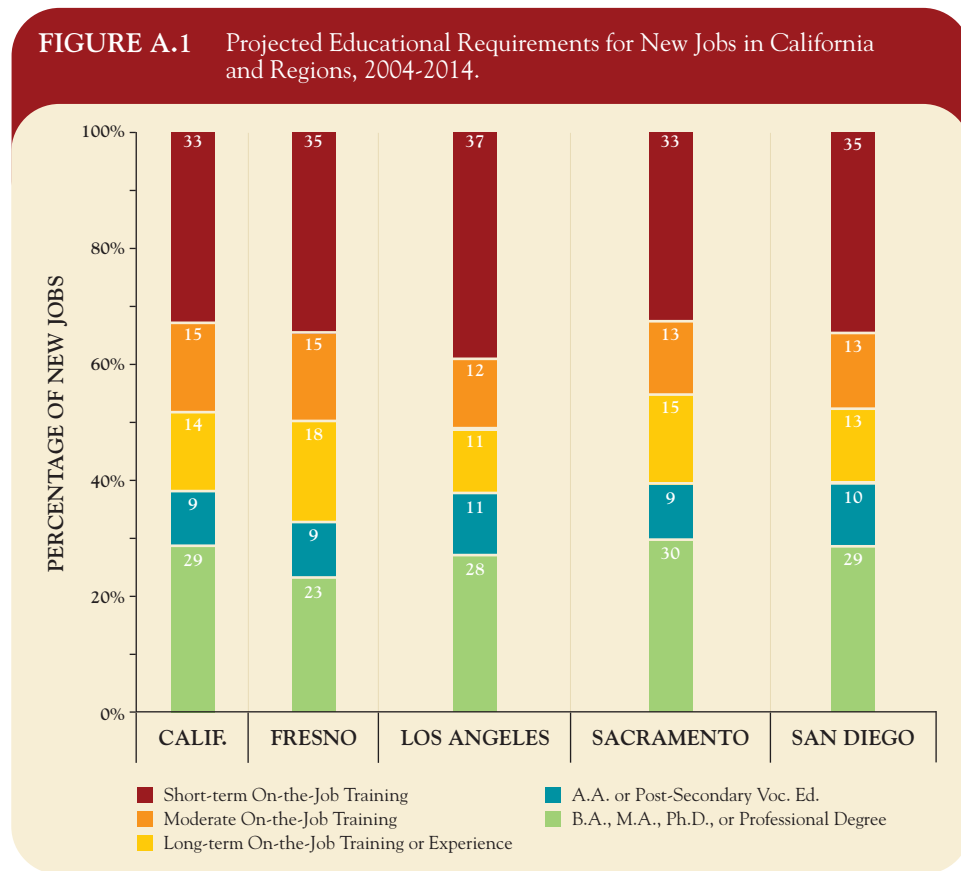
FIGURE A.1 Projected Educational Requirements for New Jobs in California and Regions, 2004-2014.

Source: California Employment Development Department (EDD), Labor Market Info Data Library (LMID).
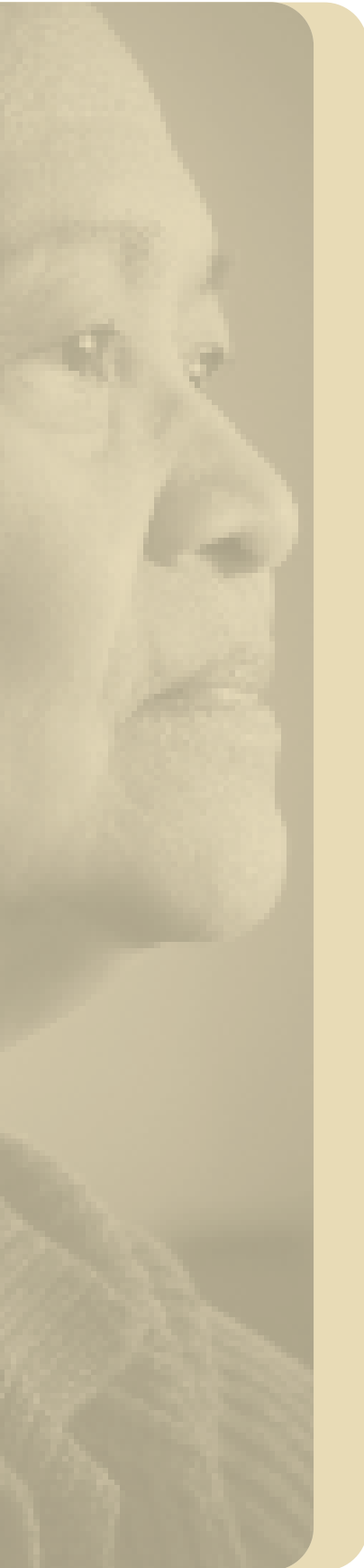
regions for many workers with moderate levels of education and on-the-job training. While much has been made in recent years about the state's need for higher-skilled workers, much of this is centered in the Bay Area and the Silicon Valley. For the CWBH regions, complementary mid-skill labor is important and this could bode well for collaborative work on employment.

In thinking that through, it is also important to consider the projected median wage for each level of education. We show this in **Figure A.2** and as might be expected, the wage premium rises with education. But within

this overall pattern, there are two sub-trends worth marking.

The first is how flat the gain is in Sacramento and San Diego for having a community college education versus having on-the-job experience; the community college premium does rise in Los Angeles and Fresno. In general, this suggests that the collaborative experience of placing workers, providing experience, and working to ensure on-the-job training may be of special interest. But it also suggests that in Fresno and Los Angeles, pathways to community college may be especially important.

FIGURE A.2 Projected Median Wage by Educational Requirements and Regions, 2004-2014.
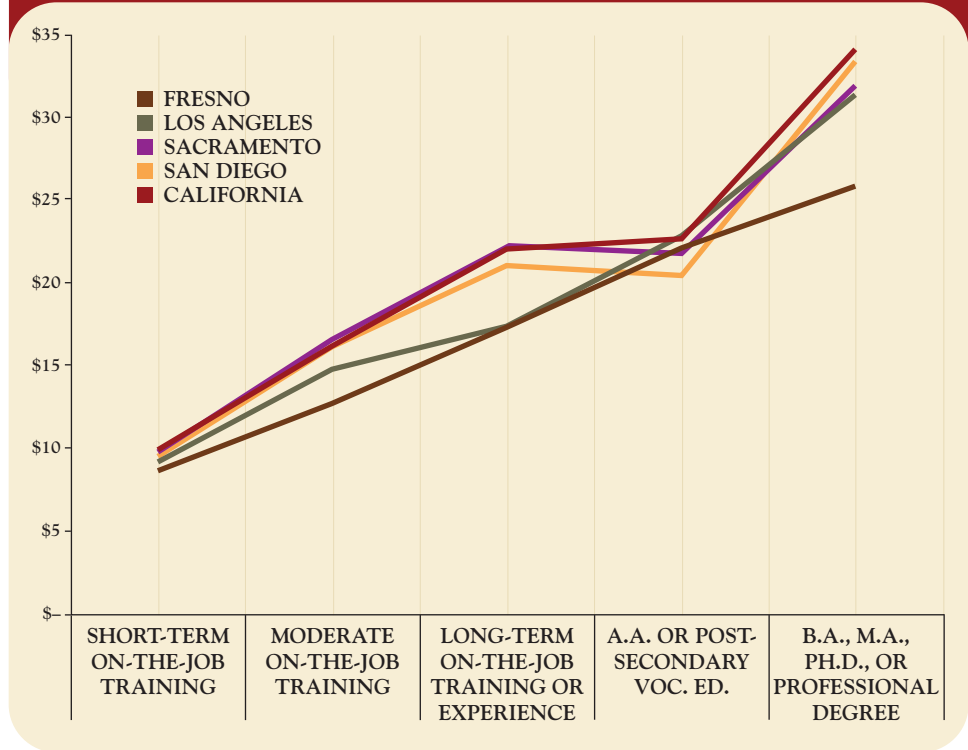
The second trend involves looking at the regional disparities in relation to education. The striking thing here is how relatively low the premium is for a college education in Fresno. This has created issues of a "brain drain" and suggests another reason for business and FWBH to collaborate in solving the region's problems, particularly through an emphasis on addressing the disincentives for higher-skilled workers by concentrating on how to bring up those already living in Fresno and committed to the area.

The demographic and economic contexts laid out here are critically important—this is, after all, an initiative about linking people to employment. There is yet another layer of contexts that we address in the next chapter that is equally important for understanding the regions—the policy and political dynamics that lay the ground for creating greater opportunities.