

# **NDRC Equity and Achieving Equitable Outcomes Webinar Transcript Thursday, November 4, 2014 3:00-4:30pm EDT**

Speaker: Good afternoon, my name is Kasey and I will be your conference operator. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Equity and Achieving Equitable Outcomes Conference Call. All lines have been placed in a listen only mode, but we will conduct an interactive question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question during that time, simply press star and the number one on your telephone key pad. You will hear a tone acknowledging your request and a prompt to record your name. If you would like to withdraw your question, please press star and the number two. Thank you. I would now like to turn the conference over to Kathy Kaminski with TDA. You may begin.

Kathy Kaminski: Thank you Kasey, I am just going to run through some technical instructions here today before I hand it off to our wonderful panelists. Please give your undivided attention to our speakers today and close your e-mail and other programs on your computer, and turn off cell phones. If you are having any technical problems, you can call George Martin at the number on the screen. There is also a chat function, you will see it on the right side of your screen, and you can send a message to the host. That will go to me and I can help answer any questions there.

As Kasey mentioned, everybody is going to be muted during the call. Questions can be asked in two ways, verbally via the conference call, or in writing using the Q & A tool. To ask a written question on the Q & A tool, you should see it on the right side of your screen, there's a screen shot there for you, it should be on the bottom right hand side. If you do not see it expanded, click on the little arrow, or the triangle next to the Q & A... Next to the question mark icon and it should expand. Then you can ask your question to all panelist.

You can also ask the question verbally, and again that is press \*1 on your telephone keypad to be added to the queue.

Just a couple more notes on the questions. We are going to answer all questions verbally today. We may not be able to get to everything but we are going to try to get to as many as possible. This is a topical webinar, not a general NOFA today. If you have additional unanswered questions, you can send them to the e-mail address on the screen, [resilientrecovery@hud.gov](mailto:resilientrecovery@hud.gov); and with that, I'm going to hand it off to Lynsey Johnson, with HUD.

Lynsey Johnson: Great, thanks so much Kathy. Hi, everyone thanks so much for joining us today. Today is Equity: Achieving Equitable Outcomes is the second webinar in a series of nine topical webinars running concurrently with the NDRC, or National Disaster Resilience Competition project application period. This is really an opportunity to learn more about one of the key components, the climate resiliency planning and project development.

I want to make sure that I note that this presentation is more so intended to provide communities and states with tools and information to help with the climate resilience planning process and

project and activity development. Information in this webinar is independent of the NOFA or Notice of Funding Availability for the National Disaster Resilience Competition. We expect you to use some of the best practices and ideas that come from this, but by no means should it be construed as the definitive word on any singular approach to resilience. And so, with that being said, there won't be any NOFA NDRC questions answered during this presentation. For any NOFA or NDRC questions, you can send that to the [resilientrecovery@hud.gov](mailto:resilientrecovery@hud.gov) e-mail address.

I also want to note that next... or this next webinar coming up on Thursday, November 6, at 3 p.m. will be the NDRC phase one factors question and answer with Jessie Handforth Kome. That will be a live question/answer, so if you do not want to submit your e-mail questions to the [resilientrecovery@hud.gov](mailto:resilientrecovery@hud.gov), make sure to tune into the Thursday webinar.

It is my privilege to introduce today's moderators and presenters. Today's moderator is Dr. Matthew Tejada, who is the director of the U.S. EPA Office of Environmental Justice. Our presenters today will be Kalima Rose from our Policy Link Center for Infrastructure Equity and she is the senior director at Policy Link. Suzi Ruhl is also joining us from the U.S. EPA Office of Environmental Justice, and she is a senior attorney advisor with the office. Finally, we have Carlton Eley, who is the Environmental Protection Specialist for the office of Environmental Justice at EPA as well. Right now, I will turn it over to Dr. Tejada who will moderate today's session.

Moderator: Hi Lynsey and thanks so much for that introduction and thanks also to the panelists who are going to be presenting today on this very important topic. Again, my name is Matthew Tejada. I'm the director of the EPA's Office of Environmental Justice here in Washington DC and I also just want to thank all of ya'll for attending today to learn more about what we feel is not just a vitally important, but a centrally important topic that we all need to keep at the forefront of our considerations as we look towards disaster resiliency and communities. Not just for the competition that is currently running at the Federal level for communities to hopefully avail themselves of, but in general, to take lessons from what we are going to discuss today in terms of equity. In terms of equity in planning and in community resilience and sustainability planning around the United States, it is such a crucial topic to every aspect of what we think about when we're planning for resilience in communities.

Taking into consideration those communities that are already overburdened; those communities which have populations that are already vulnerable, beyond the average population, to different social or environmental, or economic stressors. It really is something that we feel at EPA, especially from the office of environmental justice, is centrally critical to these sorts of considerations, and part of our mission to work on sustainability across the United States and work on administrator Gina McCarthy's mandate to create visible differences in communities. Just to stress, it really is such an important consideration keeping those vulnerable and overburdened communities in mind when looking at issues of resiliency. It is something that I think a lot of practitioners and a lot of agencies and regulators around the country are starting to learn more about. We are pleased that this is being featured in these webinars. We will continue to work with our partners around the federal family and with of course, Housing and Urban Development, to continue to evolve. Exactly how we can get equity into the plan, how we can make those equity considerations at the federal level, and work with folks from the federal level all the way down to the community where that change will actually manifest itself. And where it is felt and where it is needed most to make sure that we do deliver on those visible differences to communities. So with that, I'd like to pass it on to Kalima Rose from Policy Link, to start giving us the actual content of today's webinar.

Kalima Rose: Well thank you very much Director Tejada for inviting me to speak today, and welcome to you forty-six participants across the country. I am speaking to you from Policy Link headquarters in Oakland, California, and we have particularly focused on this issue of resilience by working with all of the federal grantees on the sustainable communities initiative over the last four years. Our particular role was to provide capacity, building support to the consortia that were formed at either the municipal or regional level, and to make sure that they achieved social equity outcomes in their planning. If somebody could, I do not seem to have control of this slide show, I am trying to advance it... oops, there you go. Okay sorry everyone, it just looks a little different from the way I sent it formatted.

Besides working with the sustainable communities grantees to help them deliver on social equity outcomes, Policy Link opened an office in New Orleans and worked on Katrina recovery for five years, from 2005 to 2010 with the sole objective of ensuring equity outcomes in the recovery. I led that office and so had the privilege of working with both local, state and federal government leaders, as well as civic leaders and the nonprofit organizations that really drove the recover. So, when we talk about equity, we mean that it creates just and fair inclusion where all can participate, prosper and reach their full potential.

Addressing equity and resiliency means that ensuring vulnerable people, places and infrastructure are all strengthened in the process. So, for us, what we understand are that the demographics of America are rapidly changing, and that we are becoming a people of color nation. Particularly this is true in our cities, and we know that in majority, people of color communities that people face lower... people of color communities face lower education levels, lower income levels, and higher unemployment levels. So we know that to have resilient communities, people of higher incomes always do better when facing resiliency challenges, or extreme storm events, or community resiliency that has infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather events, or other things. So, we know that the communities that face the biggest challenges in both facing events with resiliency and recovering from them, are lower income communities, and communities of color.

We have, in our years of doing resiliency work, understood that if you can actually engage low-income communities, and communities of color, before extreme weather or disaster events, and engage them in the work of making their communities more resilient, that you actually improve the chances of them meeting those resiliency events with a lot greater capacity. So we've seen that if you can focus on those communities that is actually a superior growth model, you increase people's knowledge and technical skills beforehand, and their incomes, and it makes them in better leadership positions and more resilient as families to respond.

We think that happens at three levels. It happens at the policy level where you are implementing change by the targeting of resources, of leadership structures. It happens at the community levels through projects and engagement, and it happens at the individual and family level through the provision of services that support families and individual health and wellbeing. So, this is the framework I hope that you were able to participate last week in the webinar that focused on engagement and governance. So, I will quickly walk you through this, but there is a much longer webinar that you can listen to that Policy Link also presented.

If you are facing forward and thinking how can we create more resiliency in our municipality or region, and you want to engage communities of color, in that work you really need to establish the

systems of engagement. We found that the very best way to do that is to engage the organizations that already work in those communities. To apply resources so that they are staffed to be able to both participate in the tables that you're setting, and that they can do culturally competent outreach to the residents of their community to engage them in any visioning or planning or implementation processes.

In the sustainable community's initiative, that meant that ten percent of grantees budgets were set aside specifically to do that engagement work. The thing that happens by having those communities as your outreach and at your governance tables, is that they can listen to what their communities are saying are needed to generate resilience in their communities, and they can translate that into your plan. They can hold the planning process accountable to moving forward on those recommendations. They can set goals to make sure that happens. They can partner with the person in your agencies that... in the government/public sector agencies that are responsible for moving the plan forward. And they can make sure that they are reaching out to other members of their community and getting them on the boards and commissions that will be responsible for implementing the plan.

A key part of both applying to do resiliency work, and implementing it, is thinking about what data can inform your work; and what is the purpose of that data? So, if you say we really want to see more residents and communities of color engaged in resilient activity, having greener infrastructure in their communities so that they can withstand it. More jobs for those residents, then you set out data that measures those things and can measure your progress.

Finally, you get to the policy and resource alignment. That is where you begin saying we're going to target the resources of our transportation dollars, or parks and recreation dollars, or housing and community development dollars, or workforce investment board dollars, et cetera, to make sure that resources are flowing down to the plans and that they are really affecting outputs and outcomes in those communities.

When you want to think about resiliency outcomes, what do you do? You target those resources to vulnerable communities. So we know, for instance, that here is an example of how you might generate triple bottom line outcomes. You could say we know that buildings in our community generate forty percent of the greenhouse gases. So, we want to do energy retrofits of buildings in our community to reduce those greenhouse gas contributions. So, you could say we're going to retrofit all of the affordable housing, or low income housing in our community. Or, the housing of low-income residents, and we are going to target the jobs that are going to do that retrofitting to residents of those communities. So, like that you get your greenhouse gas reduction goals, you get buildings saving money on energy retrofits that can go into other human needs in those communities, and you're getting a green and resilient workforce for the future.

One of the things that communities do to approach that problem is they map the areas of poverty and racial concentrations. So, in the sustainable communities initiative, people they documented where they had areas of racially concentrated poverty, and then they worked very specifically. This is what New Orleans did to gather the community organizations in those communities to identify what would help them in the recovery, and what would make them more resilient afterwards. Out of that mapping work in the sustainable communities initiative, they targeted repairs and energy retrofits to low income homes in their communities, and began creating this green and resilient workforce.

This is a project in Portland, Oregon in an environmental justice community where they wanted to make sure the green infrastructure got put in to mitigate both the storm effects that they faced, the environmental toxins that people were exposed to. They created partnerships with schools, to make sure that middle and high school students were learning the technologies of future green economies so that they were beginning to build the workforce of stewards in the future.

In the city of San Francisco they decided, with their three billion dollar sewer and water rebuild program, and all of their energy efficiency, that they would build a workforce apprenticeship program that would teach people how to do the municipal building retrofitting, affordable housing, storm water and sewage rebuilding, and thinking about how to upgrade building systems so that the key infrastructure of the region would not be submerged with anticipated either earthquake, high water, or sea level rise.

Many communities have looked up the investments they're making in resiliency, in infrastructure systems, and in sustainability, and saying how can we build partnerships with the minority contractors in our area so that they are getting the jobs building this green infrastructure to make us more safe. Then, if we have a catastrophic event, that they could be those ready contractors to help in the building of the recovery. So, in Portland, the Living Cully partnership brings together Native American-Latino communities in Cully for investing in green infrastructure. And they contract with both social enterprises and firms of color to do. This is a park development that they built on a landfill as one of their green infrastructure and resiliency components.

Another thing built into the sustainable communities' initiative, that is really important for resilience, are creating grants programs to model and demonstrate resiliency in communities of color. This is one grant the MAPC gave to the Vietnamese American initiative to plan for a transit-oriented development around the Orange Line, a new rail stop that was being put into this community. You can see the kinds of project partners that they have. There's a community action coalition, there's a CDC, the City of Boston... so in every one of these resiliency initiatives, partnerships for collective impact are put together and they plan for the people in the place, or the place itself to improve, and for the infrastructure to be strengthened with a knowledgeable workforce and contracting partners.

This is a picture that came out of what New York City faced around hurricane Sandy, and you can see that the critical infrastructure of the region faced incredible flooding. I think this is a very typical outcome of both storm surges and hurricanes, but also of what other coastal cities that are prone to either sea level rise, or to earthquakes will face. So, taking the planning money that you use in resilience to think forward about your key infrastructure, and doing the protections that happen in advance, and particularly focusing on the communities that are transit dependent, or where there are high unemployment rates to work on the resiliency retrofitting, are really key strategies that you can look at.

In wrapping up, I would just say that these are the key equity lenses that you would be bringing to a resiliency plan. How can we get to resilience while growing good jobs, building a skilled workforce; expanding opportunities, not putting any subsidies into resilience work without accountability to the equity outcomes and making sure that you have the structures, and infrastructure in place to grow and diversify the procurement and entrepreneurship that is going on around it.

A couple of places that did this deeply... New Orleans was about a decade into their recovery from Katrina when they realized that African American men, who were part of the majority population of the city, had not been included in the recovery. Despite tens of billions of dollars coming in, so, they... after identifying that fifty-two percent of the workers were unemployed in that community, they engaged us in a democracy collaborative to identify what are the key job growth areas in the next decade of resilience and recovery work. We set up a process to interview five hundred out of work African American men to understand what their barriers were, and we created, in partnership with leaders in New Orleans, five key initiatives to engage employers in the city and the infrastructure anchors to target twelve thousand new jobs to that population.

In Rhode Island, same thing; as they were doing sustainability planning, they did an equity analysis of how they were doing inside their state agencies in hiring and contracting. They saw that their levels of employment and contracting fell far below the representation of those populations in the general community. So the governor signed an executive order asking every one of his agencies, and every procurement process they went through to set higher goals, and to put in place the systems to be able to meet them.

The resources and tools that we have that you can draw on to think about how you might structure your resilience activities are on our center for infrastructure equity website. You can see the web link here on the site, and then in the sustainable communities' initiative we did a guide for how you can structure engagement. That is also there, and then we developed an application guide that went with the sustainable communities NOFA, that really shows how, for each aspect of your plan, you can link equity to that, and it could be extrapolated to think about how you could do that with equity work.

We just released this week a national equity atlas that allows you to go and enter your city, or metropolitan area, and see the equity indicators in your place that you could take on as part of your resiliency challenge to change. We are having a webinar on how to use that equity atlas to do your own data downloading on November 18. With that, I will turn it back to Matthew, or the next presenter.

Lynsey Johnson: Thanks so much Kalima. Suzi Ruhl now will talk a little more about the equity focus.

Suzi Ruhl: Sure, thank you Lynsey and HUD for convening the webinar, and for Kalima for providing the architecture, and to all of you for joining this call, because as we all know, we're in a period of unprecedented challenges, and unprecedented opportunities. I think, as we all know, the consequence of climate are irrefutable and tangible, the strain on our healthcare and social systems from diseases are undeniable and palpable. The challenges from global to local that we are facing, demand not just creative thinking, but transformational thinking and action. Thanks to the funding that is available through this competition, we have an unprecedented opportunity to revitalize our communities where we learn from the challenges, we apply our best practices that many of you on the phone are already implementing, and importantly, engaging all of the stakeholders in the community.

From the perspective of the environmental justice, we strongly believe that we can build on the important work that's underway across the federal, state and local governments, the private sectors,

academia, nonprofits and residents so that we do achieve that triple bottom line that Kalima was talking about in terms of economic health and environmental resiliency.

So, what I want to do today is really cover three parts fairly briefly, but pretty much as a top assist to spur your interest. The three areas are first of all to talk about the environmental justice and equity principles that are contained in national policy regarding resiliency and disaster recovery and response. I wanted to highlight a particular strategy that is relevant to EPA's work, which I think is a useful approach for building in equity and resiliency through disaster planning and preparation. Then illustrate it with a couple of best practices. So that's essentially what I want to do in the minutes that I have.

Regarding the first point in terms of environmental justice and equity principles, disasters over the past decade and beyond have shown the need for strength in infrastructure and strength in coordination. Again, if we're going to learn from the challenges and leverage the opportunity, I think it's very useful to understand that we do have some stakes in the ground, some milestones that help give us some directional signals as we are thinking about our transformational work relative to equity. The first one that I will mention is the national disaster recovery framework, which is also buttressed by the presidential policy directive number eight, which sets out the objectives of a recovery framework. Again, it is not just about repairing from what happened before and rebuilding in the same way, but it is redoing things in a different way where we can restore, redevelop and revitalize. What is very important is the health, the social, the economics, and the natural environmental fabric of the entire community.

The national disaster recovery framework provided a number of recovery core principles, nine in total, but I thought that four were directly related to this issue of equity. Obviously, the issue of individual and family empowerment, when you have the disasters that happen at the very tangible level, it is about partnerships and inclusiveness like Kalima mentioned. Those that are not necessarily already part of the framework of decision-making. It is about resiliency and sustainability and I think another point that is receiving increased attention now, and I will be giving an example, is this notion of psychological and emotional recovery. Because at the end of the day, people need to be healthy from the perspective of physical, of mental, and other aspects, if they're going to be participating in disaster recovery, but resiliency in the long run.

I think it is also useful to know that there is a legally mandated requirement that recovery plans are equitable. So, like I said, I think there are some really exciting roadmaps on some of the theories about what should be addressed and included in efforts to deal with resiliency that incorporates equity. I will also mention that the Hurricane Sandy rebuilding strategy also contains these same principles, so like I said, there is a lot of good work that you can build on and refer to.

Thinking about the principles of equity in addition to this overall architecture, which sets off these guiding principles, I think there are three key parts at a minimum that speak to the focus areas of addressing equity in terms of resiliency and planning. The first one is to understand the concept and definition of resiliency, because it is more than just physical infrastructure. I think there is a tendency to deal with that first, whether it is your bridges or your subway systems, or even your buildings. But it really does speak to the economic, the environmental health and social capacity. It is about the ability of individuals and communities to prepare for and adapt to the changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from the disruptions. It is a much broader conversation, I think than is happening in certain areas.

It's also important, I think, to really think the types of disruptions that communities are facing. Whether it's a deliberate attack, whether it's an accident, whether it's naturally occurring, these are all things that factor into these building resilience communities, and equitable communities. And within that context of understanding this broader definition of resiliency, looking at the factors that influence resiliency, and it relates to the stakeholders and what's required of that particular stakeholder. It relates to the scale and time of the planning and rebuilding efforts. Is it something that you recover in a short period of time, or is it years like we're seeing in many of the Sandy communities? There is the issue of how frequent and how severe are the storm events in the area, so these are all factors that need to be woven into the planning process of understanding how to make communities truly resilient.

Another point and this is something that Dr. Tejada mentioned, is the concept of what is the population that we are really looking at in terms of resiliency across the board. I think while it is given that natural disasters themselves do not respect jurisdictional lines, they do not respect income levels, they do not respect race and ethnicity, the consequences of those events are often borne more heavily by certain communities than others, and I think that is the important point to distinguish. What was exciting is to see this recognition that yes, we are dealing with vulnerable populations, those who might be living on the coast, but within that, there are also populations that are overburdened and underserved.

In the Hurricane Sandy recovery strategy, there was, I think, a very useful delineation of the various segments within society that we should be considering as we are developing our resiliency planning and programming. Kalima mentioned there are low-income communities, overburdened population is a term that came out of Plan EJ2014 from the Environmental Protection Agency, but it was the recognition that environmental justice is about having too much pollution in your community. But it's also about not having access to central goods and services; so, too much of the bad and not enough of the good. That is a factor that plays very heavily in disaster recovery and response.

The Hurricane Sandy strategy also realized that children and elderly populations have unique vulnerabilities in terms of a storm event. The issue of limited English proficiency, immigrants, chronic medical conditions, and homelessness... all of these things need to be considered when you talk about vulnerable populations, again not just looking at the people who are on the frontline of the storm event, but of the frontline of the consequences. It is recognizing too that in addition to individuals and families, you are looking at the businesses. You are looking at the neighborhood fabric, you are looking at the workers and how these people will be impacted, again, on a whole deep range of consequences. Not just environmental, not just help, but relating to loss of benefits. These are things that need to be factored into.

I also just want to put on the table, HUD's definition of environmental justice and their environmental justice strategy, because it does, I think, touch upon all these points that we've talked about. From access to safe and healthy housing, mitigating the risk, improving access to affordable housing that is free of hazards, and really promoting an inclusive sustainable communities that are free from discrimination.

Once again, these are some more guiding principles that I think help shape a resiliency planning effort. The last of the three points that I wanted highlight from an overarching perspective is this recognition of environmental risk in a disaster situation, a natural disaster situation. Because natural

disasters can certainly exacerbate what we could call human disasters, and we need to be looking at the environmental risk, which can be indoor, on site and off site. From an indoor perspective, we have homes that have lead, asbestos, radon and mold. Especially in a storm event, mold is a key issue.

We also have situations where there could be a contaminated site, whether it is a brown field, a superfund site, that when you have a storm event, the flooding activities moves that contamination. That is something that has to be factored in. and then of course, there is the issue of our infrastructure with wastewater and drinking water, and with the overflows, it can really exacerbate an already difficult situation. It is this recognition from inequity perspective that those communities, who are subject to the disaster, also have these other environmental health and public health stressors, and you need to be mindful of that going in so that you can start trying to mitigate some of those issues at the outset.

Like I said before, in terms of the health risk, there are a number of disease disparities, but also disparities with natural disasters such as asthma. And like I mentioned before, the psychological and emotional recovery. So, I think these, from an equity perspective, are... like I said, there is an architecture, and there's some key points to really focus on to be able to respond to the concerns with an inequitable proposal, and inequitable solutions.

The next part of what I want to talk about relates to some strategies that can be used to address some of these challenges, but also lay the groundwork for the opportunities for success. I think the brown fields program that is operated by a number of different agencies, including EPA, including HUD, is a great example of really flipping a challenge, something that is very draining to your community from an economic base because it is not on the tax roll, to environmental concerns. Then it is tagged to solution, and so, I am sure most of you know this, it is standard by now, but brown fields are sites with real or perceived contamination that limit the reuse potential. I think the perceived contamination is an important point, because I think up to thirty percent of the brown field sites do not have any contamination. So that's a good thing in terms of taking a property and perhaps turning it into something that would support green infrastructure or a community garden. The numbers are, there are virtually brown fields in every community across the country, and that they are a source of stress from an environmental, economic, social, health, wellbeing perspective; and again the weather events can cause a migration of the contamination to other properties. So, this is the notion of brown fields as a challenge.

The next slide really talks about how you can flip that challenge into something that is going to be healthy for that community, but also help to make that community more resilient to natural disasters. Initially, it is a clear opportunity to help the populations who are facing a number of cumulative and multiple negative and adverse health and environmental impacts. To help get them engaged in some pre development discussions to try to make these sites not only remediated from the contamination, but flip into something that will provide that resiliency and protection for the community. It is an opportunity to bring additional funding and resources into the community to supplement the planning resources, because there is funding available for site assessment, for site cleanup. It is an opportunity to address that traditional CDBG concern of blight, and can use that to revitalize and reduce the blight.

It is also providing a very powerful vehicle and a magnet to bring a lot of diverse stakeholders to the table, whether it's the private sector, whether it's local government, whether it's a community

organization, or a healthcare organization that wants that property for an end use, but to help coordinate the land use planning. Fundamental to brown fields is actually workforce development and job training. That gets to the other aspect of the triple bottom line, as well as the economic development and the environmental cleanup. It is also important to note within the brown field's arena that does provide some additional resources to increase participation and decision making by the people who are directly affected by that brown field, who are living on, or near that particular site. Also, as we talked about evidence based approaches, as we talk about the need to set up the metrics and then collect the data, it does give something very clear... a very clear framework to track the project outcomes and the progress towards sustainability, whether it's engagement of the community residents or whether it's the level of remediation.

I think that there are some clear methodologies available within the brown fields programs, and the brown fields concepts, that are aligned with resiliency. Again, I do not like just to talk about the theory and the practice, but also about capacity to do this. So, what this slide does is really represent and summarize the assets that are available through the brown fields program at EPA, which can assist you in achieving the objective that we talked about. Like I said, there's grant programs dealing with the assessment, the cleanup, there's also area wide planning, which gives the opportunity to think more holistically about a particular area. And like I said before, workforce development and job training.

We have found in many communities, to get them jumpstarted in engaging brown fields, to flip them from a challenge into an asset, is really knowing where they are and what they are near, and what the demographic conditions are in these particular sites. I have provided a link to some list and maps of state inventories, which can get you started. One other area, which I think is exciting, is in addition to the grant programs for larger projects, EPA has an opportunity to provide a targeted technical assistance for a site assessment. Rather than having to go through an entire competitive process, there is the capacity, in working with our regional offices, to get help in looking at these particular sites to see if they are contaminated or not, and what needs to be done to help address that contamination. Last on the list is some environmental facts data warehouse, which can help inform your planning process for resiliency, so I wanted to leave those resources with you.

The third part that I want to talk about, again moving from the theory and the practice with some illustrations, I want to talk a little more deeply about one exciting project in New Haven, Connecticut and then I will summarize another project in Long Island. But essentially, in New Haven, the population is a very significant minority population; almost thirty percent live below the poverty line. Almost seventy percent are non-white, almost ten percent... only... less than ten percent hold bachelor's degrees and it's interesting because this is also the home town of Yale University, so you have a very well established university in an area with very serious challenges.

In 2010, a partnership was created with Yale, and with a number of community organizations, as well as local government and social service organizations, that was designed to address the intersection of mental health and poverty in the low-income families of New Haven. We were engaging with them because they have a gold standard delivery of mental health services program, but they were challenged because they did not have local access points. So, we started the conversation about their utilizing remediated brown fields or abandoned underground storage tank sites, properties that were blights on the community that were not offering anything to the tax rolls, but which could be flipped for a community mental health hub. So that was kind of our vision.

They have been working with the Connecticut Department of Social Services and were approved for a Hurricane Sandy Social Services block grant. Not the CDBG, but the social services, to actually turn this whole area that they had been working on from the perspective of mental health and access the contamination to fit within the resiliency planning framework. Their program is going to be providing healthcare and emotional recovery services. Part of that is economic resiliency and workforce development, not just job creation, but job creation for people who are mentally and physically healthy. They have a very exciting program of community ambassadors to do a lot of this work. I think there is over a hundred of them where they are actually training the low income mothers who live in the areas of pollution and poor mental health, to work with the program and share the information on how to address their issues.

From our perspective, what is very exciting is in their plan, they are going to develop between three and twelve mental health hubs in these communities. So, again, the example coming out of New Haven, Connecticut is accessing the Sandy funding to really get to core public health issues. Like I said before, the national framework mentions psychological services as the foundation, so we've got that. It gets into the workforce development, and then it gets into the cleanup of the contamination and turning that into something good. So, I think that's a really exciting project that's coming out of some resiliency funding, that's being strengthened by the resiliency funding, and there will be a really good national model.

I also want to mention, in addition to the work that's being done in New Haven with the Hurricane Sandy territory, there has also been a lot of very important work being done on equity and resiliency in New York and New Jersey. This is an example of in Long Island where the points in purple are the low income populations and the Federal family came together working with state and local government and a variety of stakeholders. Some high points of their approach started with the sharing of the data and the analytical tools so people could be operating from the same set of facts. It focused on the importance of capacity building and training for the people on the ground, but also across the federal family, so everyone operated from the same level field. They were doing some work on health impact assessments; they did scenario planning, like I said, important work on community engagements. Then again, taking it from the practice and into the policy, they are addressing policy issues related to cost benefit analysis, technical planning support, eco systems goods and services. So again, I think there is a lot of really good work coming out of the Sandy area that's been doing the work on resiliency that can be accessed in terms of approaches that might be used across the rest of the country.

With that, I would like to say that environmental justice or equity is not a... it is a verb and not a noun. It is about the action, not the talk, and I think that the gravity of the challenges and the demands that we are facing really demands efficiency and effectiveness. The HUD/EPA/DOT partnership put forth a lot of effort to make it as easy as possible to do environmental justice and equity in the sustainability plan. What you have before you is what we call the wheel of fortune. That is meant to be a really good, one-stop-shopping, go to resource where you can get information on key issues relating to environmental justice and sustainability. They relate to housing, the environment, transportation and health, and it is also important because we have federal agency contacts within the different offices, and we have information on capacity building and resources relating to training and technical assistance.

As we all go forth, know that we're all in good company, that we have a lot of really good examples, we have a lot of resources available, and I think that overall we'll have a really good chance of success.

Lynsey Johnson: Thank you so much Suzi. Carlton, I will turn it over to you.

Carlton Eley: Thank you Lynsey, and also I want to thank HUD for providing this opportunity to participate in this webinar, and also I just want to acknowledge it's been great having the opportunity to work with Kalima Rose of Policy Link, as well as Suzi Ruhl, who is my co-worker at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Also, I want to thank all of you for taking the time to participate in today's webinar. This discussion is important and timely because of the renewed focus on social equity and planning policy.

Today I want to take a few minutes, approximately twelve, really just to talk about equitable development and giving sustainability a push. I believe that the discussions that have been set up by Kalima, as well as by Suzi, do a lot to talk about not just how we advance goals that are good for the environment and good for the economy, but really make sure that we do what is required to encourage outcomes that are going to be truly sustainable. So I just want to take twelve minutes just to elevate some thoughts about equitable development from the perspective of a practitioner.

I have an undergraduate degree in sociology and social work, and a master's degree in urban planning. While it is important to make sure that we have proper programs in place, we also realize that a lot of the work eventually is going to fall on individuals who will have to think critically about how do we make sure that these issues; or the approaches that we apply, manifest themselves in clear outcomes and results. So, I just want to say, whether you are striving to encourage environmental justice or equitable development, it is important to acknowledge that these are active endeavors. They are not passive activities, and so making a shift beyond the status quo always requires effort. It is important to be transparent about the fact that work will come before success, so we just want to make sure that as we share, and as we impart information based on our own experiences, that we are transparent in the process.

First, I realize it is important to start out with a common definition of the fact, so everyone is on the same page. For several years, I have been speaking to audiences about equitable development, and often I reference the following definition. First is the fact that equitable development is an approach to meeting the needs of underserved communities, through policies and practices that reduce disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant.

The Office of Environmental Justice at EPA actually organized the 2014 Equitable Development workshop that was held in Denver in February, and I am sharing this definition because it actually served the workshop planning committee very well during its preparations. Normally, when I am asked to offer remarks on this topic, I like to begin by acknowledging the International City/County Management Association. They tend to stress that planning at its best takes account of the social implications of land use and economic development decisions. Now, what this means is planning is not professionally or institutionally separate from the social realm, and this has been communicated by the two previous speakers. But in practical terms, it means we are a nation of three hundred and seventeen million people. We have citizens from all walks of life, and if we don't think critically about how to meet the needs of vulnerable populations properly, then we may fall short in ensuring that everyone has a safe and healthy environment in which to live, work and play.

I don't want to beleaguer the point, but the social implications of land use and economic development decisions have been a reoccurring theme in planning practice over the span of the past fifty years. In fact, we are approaching the fiftieth anniversary next year, 2015, of Paul Davidoff actually becoming an active proponent of advocacy planning, which is an important precursor for the conversation that we are having today.

Traditionally, the hurdles to addressing social equity as we work through revitalized communities have been first, framing how to implement it during the planning process. Secondly, visualizing the product from that process, and then finally, correcting the misperception that addressing these issues may slow down development. However, thanks to the tireless efforts of researchers and advocates, the creative thinking of planners and architects, and the compelling results of determined community builders, those barriers are coming down. Even at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of environmental justice, we realize the public has become accustomed to hearing messaging about social equity framed mainly in the context of problem identification. So, we're using this milestone to elevate that there is actually a very impressive narrative of problem solving in terms of work that is happening within communities, in terms of very clear, tangible results that demonstrate how people are moving from idea to practice. And making sure that they meet the needs of community instead of the underserved, as well as overburdened.

If you are searching for tangible examples, there are plenty you can access through EPA's twentieth anniversary video series. The video series is also linked to EPA's environmental justice and action blog. We realize the public learns from good examples, and I am being deliberate in sharing these tools because they were designed specifically to elevate the stories that should be part of the industry dialogue. Stewardship of the built environment as an industry, so whether you are a planner, an urban designer, an elected official, or a layperson, you will find plenty of solutions when you visit these two online sites.

Normally I like to dive into a set of case examples, however, I think it's going to be more important to explain what those achieving equitable outcomes require if you work in the public sector whether you're working at the state level, the local government, or a metropolitan planning organization. In response, what I am going to do is use a literary metaphor from the Adventures of Tom Sawyer and say; what does this really have to do with white washing the fence? I have worked on urban policy at the federal level and it's been my experience that the manner for handling issues, which follow along the social pillar of sustainability, often leave a lot to be desired. It is getting better, but it is important to make sure we also acknowledge historically, they have been challenges.

Over time, in my own career, I have learned to treat the social pillar of sustainability much like white washing the fence. The summary I made working on these issues appear to be as fun and fascinating as working on the prevailing approaches for encouraging sustainable communities. Speaking from experience, you would be amazed just how quickly a program will warm up to an idea like equitable development once you establish a track record. From lecturing and writing, by coordinating recognition programs, by making it a requirement of the grants and cooperative agreements that you manage, and by building relationships with allied professionals; especially those that are untapped and conducting community technical assistance projects.

I think it is important to stress that at the end of the day, public policy is as much about priorities and values as it is about rules. Sometimes the best way to encourage the institutions that we work for to be pliable is to simply change the way in which we manage the projects, which fall under our portfolio.

Second, there is one brief point that I do want to make about collaboration. When it comes to local initiatives, it is easy for parties to get the impression that collaboration is much like a straight line. There is a start point, there is a process and there is an end point; and in these instances, parties may charge ahead thinking that there really are no bumps in the road. But of course, in reality, the collaborative process is a bit more dynamic. Certainly, when you are working on issues of resiliency, it will be extremely dynamic, meaning that there will be highs and lows in the process. But collaboration simply means that various parties are willing to work through the highs and lows so that they reach the same end point. I need to stick a pin in the term work through. Collaboration is a very affable word, but it is also important to acknowledge that collaboration should not be conflated to mean conflict avoidance.

As a sociologist, I do not look at conflict as necessarily being something that is negative. Sometimes people really need to have an opportunity to talk about issues and challenges before they can have a constructive conversation about what the solutions may be. So, in the span of my career, I've learned to look at collaboration, as well as working on equitable development, much like a journey. In fact, I appreciate the unexpected things that may happen during the collaborative process because they present an opportunity for growth, they require us to think a little bit more critically, and they enable us to be innovative.

The third point I just want to acknowledge, is really the fact that award-winning outcomes for equitable development are not the result of serendipity. They really are the result of clearly set expectations, collaborative problem solving and persistent leadership. Also, it requires working with new partners. There is a lot of untapped talent, as I noted earlier that we need to leverage as we strive to improve the environments where we live, work and play. And if we're going to forge a healthier and more prosperous future, we're going to have to penetrate new audiences.

Finally, I just want to note that it is necessary to emphasize that you cannot encourage a truly sustainable community without addressing social equity. I think that message has been stressed and sent home over the process of today's webinar; but any attempt to do so... I mean, only to focus on the economy and the environment, is a lot like cherry picking, and cherry picking, unfortunately, doesn't solve difficult problems. Instead, it simply shifts the burden of responsibility to another generation. But discussions like today's webinar are important because they remind us that sustainability means we're wrapped in a garment of mutual destiny. Research from the Center for American Progress offers an important reminder of this point. According to the center, thirty-seven million Americans live below the official poverty line. At the micro level, persistent poverty translates into loss potential for children, as well as lower opportunities in earnings for adults. But at the macro level, persistent poverty can impair the nation's ability to remain competitive in a world of increasing global competition. So, as was noted earlier, we were talking a lot about vulnerability. It's important that as practitioners, we think a little bit more critically about how we can make sure that our approaches towards planning and development, especially in instances when we're trying to address resiliency, in terms of whether or not they're going to alleviate that vulnerability, or whether they're going to amplify it. Obviously, we want to work towards alleviating it, because it is more sustainable as an outcome.

As an urban planner who works on environmental justice, I take great interest in equitable development because I see it as a forward thinking sustainable approach. Equitable development does not shift attention from making communities better. Instead, it results in better community outcomes, especially for underserved populations and vulnerable groups. I do not want to be so hasty in my delivery, and presume everyone is having an “aaha” moment right now, or a moment of clarity, or even an epiphany if you will. The critical question that may be on the minds of some is really why encourage equitable development, or why should we address or advance addressing issues of equity as it relates to sustainability... excuse me, to resiliency... and this is a valid question, and I just want to take a moment to give you three good answers.

First, EPA's approach to environmental protection is not based on a static model. Also, the solutions for making a visible difference in communities are expansive, and they include concepts like equitable development.

Second, social responsibility versus economic imperative is a false choice. We can address both. Far too often, communities do not focus on the social implications of land use and economic development until they may receive reports of unanticipated challenges, such as the loss of historic assets that could have been properly identified. Fortunately, more tools have been developed in recent years in order to address this gap.

Third, I just want to respond by saying what a difference a decade has made. In 2000, the U.S. green building counts launched a ratings system that many of us know as LEED, Leadership and Energy and Environmental Design. LEED is very innovative and it has been an industry game changer, however, many socially responsible architects and designers realize that LEED had a gap. It did not account for social equity at the time when it was introduced into the market, but eventually a network that focused on social economic and environmental design or known as SEED was created to fill this gap in 2005. Approximately three weeks ago, the U.S. Green Building Council announced that SEED, Social Equity Pilot credits had been added to their rating system. So the take home message here is really the fact that the status quo is no longer good enough. More groups are accepting their responsibility to give sustainability a much-needed push, and that is something that we are excited about at EPA and the office of environmental justice.

If you would like to learn more about this topic, I just want to offer a couple of resources that will enable you to remain engaged. First, I just want to state that EPA's Office of Environmental Justice has many place-based tools. I think the public may not be aware of them, but I just want to draw your attention to one, which is a guide on collaborative problem solving. This is a useful document because it presents the lessons from the Regeneration Community Development Project in Spartanburg, South Carolina. This is a project that was initiated in 1996 with only a twenty thousand dollar Environmental Justice small grant from the U.S. EPA. Over the span of the past eighteen years they've been effective in leveraging over three hundred million dollars in technical support for two communities in Spartanburg Arkwright and Forest Park.

Second, if you're looking for a broad inventory of resources that pertain to issues of equitable development; and suggest what the connections may be with issues like smart growth; I just want to state that the EPA's Office of Sustainable Communities added a page to their website last summer that focuses on this intersection in terms of the connections between smart growth, environmental justice and equitable development.

Finally, the last item on the slide acknowledges the new partners for smart growth conference. It will be held in Baltimore in January 2015. Once again, the Office of Environmental Justice is organizing the workshop on equitable development, and it will be held on January 29 of next year.

I'm going to conclude with just some words from George Bernhard Shaw, who said there are some who see things as they are and say why. I dream things that never were and say why not. As a practitioner, I am in the business of giving sustainability a push. Today, my goal has been to share that the approaches for encouraging sustainable communities are not restrictive. Instead, they are expansive and they include concepts like equitable development. Also, I believe the premise of innovation requires acknowledging the fact that healthy things grow, including paradigms. If we are flexible enough to allow the paradigm of sustainability to account for social equity, or equitable development, particularly in our programs for advancing goals of resiliency within communities that are vulnerable, we can encourage a sense of balance and planning that would help to foster community parity. So again, I want to thank HUD, Kalima, Suzi, this has been a great webinar, I appreciate your patience as participants on the webinar as our audience today, and I am looking forward to continuing this discussion.

Lynsey Johnson: Great, thank you so much Carlton. Again, thank you so much to all of our speakers for joining us today and I want to make note that we have... there are e-mails up on the side here in case you think of something that comes up later on, they are going to answer any questions that you may have. So, now we are going to switch on over and look at the chats and see if any questions have come in. We did receive one question for Kalima asking what metrics are offered in the National Equity Atlas? Kalima, would you like to take a stab at that one?

Kalima Rose: Thank you, I did respond in the chat box so people can see the URL to the indicators, but they are grouped into three categories of demographics, equity, and economic benefits. Under the equity measures, we look at wages, income inequality, job and GDP growth, job and wage growth, income growth, unemployment, home ownership levels, education. Then we category... that is economic vitality, a category we call readiness, which is education levels and job requirements. That was one of the metrics that I showed you that it's anticipated that for future jobs in America, that forty percent of them are going to require at least an AA degree, and when you look at the growing majorities of people of color, there's many racial and ethnic categories that have far lower than that.

It measures disconnected youth, percentage of the population that is overweight and obese, and the connectedness via housing cost burdens, neighborhood poverty, and car access. Then in demographics, you will be able to see how from 1980 through 2040 the demographics of your area are changing. The race and ethnicity where population growth, which communities those are coming from, what the race and ethnicity and nativity. So, whether you're having new immigrant communities, or historic communities of color, and then what the racial generation gap is, and then finally you can calculate the GDP gains if you actually removed disparities in income by race and education levels. Also, the atlas has been up for a week, and I'm still finding glitches in it as I use it myself. So, if you have the choice to look at it through Google Chrome, rather than Internet Explorer, it seems to be much more functional in Google Chrome. We are trying to work out those kinks before that November 18 webinar.

One of the things we found... we piloted these kinds of measures as regional profiles for nine of the sustainable communities grantees, and I highlighted for you a couple of the actions that people have taken because of them. But I think Suzi also said, when you can use data as a common platform for looking at the picture of your city or your region, it makes conversations a lot... have the similar platform, and so we saw that people actually... communities that face challenges in employment and income, and wages, feel it individually, and know it intrinsically. But when they look at the actual data around it, it creates a whole different conversation about what should we be doing with our workforce investment boards. What should employers be doing? Why with similar education levels do we have disparity in income by race? So it just makes a much more forthright conversation and so we're happy to be a coach or a guide to anybody who's interested in investigating this data more deeply.

Lynsey Johnson: Thank you so much Kalima. I am going to turn it over to Casey, the operator and see whether we have any questions coming from callers.

Speaker: At this time, this is a reminder if you would like to participate in the interactive question and answer session please press star and the number one on your telephone key pad. You will hear a tone acknowledging your request and a prompt to record your name. If no name is recorded, then your line will be removed from the queue and your question will not taken. We will pause for just a moment to compile the Q & A roster.

Lynsey Johnson: While we pause, I just want to remind everyone that if you do have any questions regarding the NOFA specifically, for the National Disaster Resilience Competition, please do not hesitate to use the [resilientrecovery@hud.gov](mailto:resilientrecovery@hud.gov) e-mail address.

Kalima Rose: Is there the ability for people just to raise their hands to show answers to questions? Or is that only if they want to ask a question?

Lynsey Johnson: Yeah, this one is set up a little differently. They actually go in through the phone line.

Speaker: There are no questions coming in on the phone lines.

Lynsey Johnson: Great, thank you so much Kasey. So as a reminder, next week we have the NDRC phase one factors... I should say... not next week, this coming Thursday, November 6, we have the NDRC phase one factors question and answer live webinar with Jessie Handforth-Colm at 3 p.m. Eastern, so please consider joining us for that webinar. I also want to thank again, our presenters for developing such comprehensive and excellent presentations for us today, especially the talk on such a critical issue as equity and climate resilience and resilience work in general. Again, if you have any questions for our presenters, their e-mails are listed here. Also, as a reminder, this webinar will be archived on the resilient recovery website that we've put together on the HUD exchange. So, the slides and the recording will be posted for your reference and resources.

With that, again, I want to thank Kalima for joining us in San Francisco; and Suzi and Carlton for joining us here at HUD, and if there are no further questions, we will wrap this up. Thank you.

Kalima Rose: Bye everyone, thanks.

Suzi Ruhl: Thank you all.

Carlton Eley: Thank you.

Speaker: This does conclude today's conference call, you may now disconnect.