

In anticipation of the 2010 Census, a consortium of national Foundations came together to develop a nationwide plan for securing the participation of "hard-to-count" communities. By going in together on the research and analysis, they saved what would have been duplicative costs. By comparing notes with each other throughout the process, they shared best practices. By "bundling" donations they were able to improve efficiencies in census outreach. San Diego was identified as the eleventh "hardest-to-count" county in the nation and became the locus of a broadscale census outreach campaign targeting immigrant, refugee and border communities. The Foundation for Change ended up as the "broker" of census outreach funding, training and education for a network of over 60 community-based organizations and over 300 already-established leaders working in "hard-to-count" communities in San Diego. For more see: <http://foundation4change.org/networks>.

It worked because:

- \* Many of the participating foundations had worked on census outreach in 2000 and had learned the limitations of going it alone.
- \* There were growing relationships among younger-generation program officers at some of the key participating foundations.
- \* These relationships were effectively managed by a philanthropic association (Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees).
- \* A method of collaboration was created which allowed each partner to protect the autonomy of their own decision-making (it was not, in other words, a "pooled fund" requiring individual foundations to surrender their decision-making authority)
- \* The Foundation for Change was able to play the role of a "neutral convener" in San Diego.

My personal contribution is bridge-building between people of different races, ethnicities, languages, cultures, nations. Others would say that I bring intelligence and compassion.

An awareness of one's own limitations; a genuine concern for a specific (and shared) outcome is core.

We can create environments in which participants are not "punished" (by a withholding of resource, for instance) for admitting to the limitations of their own contributions.

If we did, more resources would flow to organizations not yet capable of proving their impact in quantitative and measurable terms.