Weed and Seed Technical Assistance
Needs Assessment:

Final Report

November 18, 1996

Project Staff
Steven G. Michkowski
Caroline S. Cooper
Kayla Yang
Joseph A. Trotter, Project Director
# WEED AND SEED TA/TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
## FINAL REPORT

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Background of the Project</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Timetable</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Consultant/Staff Needs Assessment Teams</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Methodology</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Principal Findings</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Overview</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Program Administration and Coordination</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Law Enforcement</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Community Policing</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Prevention, Intervention, Treatment</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Community Development/Economic Revitalization</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Federal Partner and Local Government Agency Relations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Federal Partnership Agencies</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Coordination with the Judicial System</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationship Between Weed and Seed Programs and Drug Court the EOWS and the Program Sites</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Coordination of Weed and Seed and Comprehensive Communities Programs</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Relationship Between the EOWS and the Program Sites</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Prioritization of TA and Training Needs</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Overview</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Needs Identified as Immediate</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Needs to be Addressed Within the Next Three Months</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Needs to be Addressed Within the Next Six Months</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Needs of Low Priority</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Summary</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Recommendations</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. Conclusion</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES

A. Matrix of Visited Weed and Seed Sites TA and Training Needs
B. Priority Needs of Respondent Sites
   1. Immediate/Exigent Needs
   2. Needs for Response Within the Next Three Months
   3. Needs for Response Within the Next Six Months
   4. Needs of Low Priority
C. Letters from Respondent Sites (Milwaukee and Shreveport)
D. Notable Programs at All Visited Sites
I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Project

In FY 1991, the Department of Justice (DOJ) launched a national initiative, called Weed and Seed, to reduce crime and promote economic and social revitalization in selected American communities. The individual programs operated as federal-state-local partnerships under the coordination of the cognizant United States Attorneys' Offices and backed by DOJ funding assistance and special consideration for financial and programmatic assistance from "federal partnership" agencies. It was anticipated that the sites would utilize the resources made available by the partnership agencies to implement various revitalization initiatives and to leverage additional funds from both state and private sources. The initiative was named Weed and Seed to reflect the concept of a two-tiered strategy of, first, stabilizing a "target" neighborhood by weeding out violent crime, gang activity, drug trafficking, and conditions that facilitated crime, and second, revitalizing the neighborhood by initiating and nurturing (i.e., "seeding") enhanced social services, a viable community organization and development capability, and economic improvement activities. Each site was invited to develop its own detailed strategy to achieve Weed and Seed goals, but the strategies had to involve four distinct components: law enforcement, community policing (a bridge between the "weed" and the "seed" components"), prevention/intervention/treatment, and neighborhood restoration/economic development. By mid 1995, 36 local jurisdictions had been competitively selected to receive DOJ funding to implement Weed and Seed "strategies," and most were completing their second year of funding without any assurance of continuation funding.

The FY 1995 program plan for the Department of Justice's Weed and Seed program called for a number of special efforts to support the development and institutionalization of the programs at the 36 sites, including both specific training and technical assistance efforts, primarily help with economic development strategies and planning, for a limited number of sites, and a national general technical assistance support capability. In order to assist DOJ program staff at the Executive Office of Weed and Seed (EOWS) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to optimize application of
the contract technical assistance resources available to it, the American University was awarded a contract in September 1995 to conduct and report on an assessment of the technical assistance and training needs of the 36 funded sites. This report is a documentation of that effort.

B. Timetable

The original timetable called for a project period of August 1, 1995 - January 31, 1996, with the field work portion of the needs assessment to take place during the October - December period. Unfortunately, the uncertainties of the Federal appropriations process during the second half of 1995 and two periods of government-wide furloughs during the last quarter of the year resulted in a delay in the official notification by EOWS of the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and local program representatives about the imminent needs assessment effort until January 1996. As a consequence, while much preparatory work was done reviewing a wide array of documentation that was synthesized for incorporation into consultant manuals and site manuals for each planned site visit during the September-December period, the initiation of scheduling discussions with the sites by project staff did not begin until late January and the field work portion of the project was not able to be undertaken until the period February - May 1996.

Upon the initiation of direct communication with the sites, the project staff experienced resistance from both federal and local Weed and Seed representatives in some of the jurisdictions, who felt that a needs assessment visit would not be productive given the closeness of the termination date of their current grants, combined with the absence of firm word about continuation funding. Other sites, which recently had been visited by government and contractor evaluation teams or specialized technical assistance contractors felt that yet another visit from "Washington" would be too intrusive on the schedules and good graces of local officials and program representatives, given the short time-frame that the project schedule called for. As a result, nine of the 36 funded sites declined participation in the needs assessment effort. On-site work subsequently was conducted and reported on for 27 sites. The project tasks and their revised completion dates are as follows:
Throughout the project period, through June 1996, project staff met regularly with EOWS and BJA staff and technical assistance contractors to prepare for and subsequently report on the needs assessment findings at the visited sites. Copies of a Matrix of Technical Assistance and Training Needs containing information on all 27 of the sites visited were prepared and presented to representatives of all EOWS/BJA technical assistance providers and key OJP staff at or following a formal briefing on the needs assessment at the end of May 1996. Bound volumes of the individual site reports were conveyed to the project GPM in early June, and the project-developed Site Manuals for each of the visited sites, containing distillations of materials from a variety of sources about each site were transferred to the national Weed and Seed contractor, ILJ, during June for duplication and use in that program.

The project staff circulated copies of the individual site sections of the Matrix of Needs to each site (through the USAO Weed and Seed liaison staff) during July 1996. During the period July - September, 1996, the project converted (unfortunately, through re-entry of data) the information contained in the needs matrix to a relational data base (Paradox) to facilitate its use by EOWS program staff and technical assistance contractors. A copy of the diskette containing this data is
enclosed with this report. The project officially terminated in August 1996, and this final report, representing a summary of data and analysis that had been provided to the EOWS and BJA during May and June, was deferred to permit inclusion of a section on the validation of needs assessment data by the sites and refinement of the Paradox data base.

C. Consultant/Staff Needs Assessments Teams

The project staff consisted of four persons, expending a combined total of 12 person-months of professional effort over the grant period: Project Director Joseph Trotter (three months of effort); Mitch Michkowski, the project's full-time Field Services Coordinator (six months of effort); and Caroline Cooper, who served as a needs assessment team member and senior research associate (three months of effort). Kayla Yang served as the project's administrative assistant (10 months of effort).

The project plan anticipated a three-month period of two-day site visits to the 36 funded Weed and Seed sites, beginning in September 1995, to be conducted by two-person teams of consultants or teams of a staff member and consultant. A roster of eight consultants and the three professional staff members was envisioned as being able to conduct an average of four site visits each.

Most of the project's originally proposed consultant roster did not survive the delays in project start-up caused by the government furloughs and other administrative factors described above. Six of the original consultant cadre had given their commitment for field work during the period September through November, 1995, based on the original project timetable and were otherwise obligated when the project was able to initiate field work during the February-May 1996 period; another was hired as the project director for an EOWS contractor providing economic development technical assistance to Weed and Seed sites, and was only able to participate in two American University site visits.
Fortunately, the EOWS recommended two consultants with community program experience who were able to undertake a substantial amount of the field work obligations of the needs assessment: a community organization and development specialist who was formerly a Weed and Seed program local coordinator, and a recently retired HUD official who had been a program manager for federally funded substance abuse reduction programs in public housing projects. (These two consultants were able to participate in visits to a combined total of 17 of the 27 sites covered in the needs assessment effort). In addition, the project recruited seven other consultants, primarily individuals with multi-jurisdictional justice system technical assistance experience and sensitivity to community and interagency relations in justice system operations. This combined total of 11 consultants and the three senior project staff members conducted 56 "person-visits" to the 27 funded Weed and Seed sites which had accepted the EOWS invitation to participate in the needs assessment effort. All sites were visited by two-person teams except for the four sites -- Holland, Chicago, Wilmington and Chelsea -- that were chosen for pilot testing of the project's on-site protocols and logistical and coordination procedures; these involved teams of three or four staff and consultants.

The project needs assessment team members and the numbers of sites visited by each are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Sites Visited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leonard Axelrod</td>
<td>Philadelphia, Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Beaudin</td>
<td>Chelsea, Wilmington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Campbell</td>
<td>San Diego, Santa Ana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin Cohn</td>
<td>Mobile, Riviera Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Cooper</td>
<td>District of Columbia, Wilmington, Hartford, Shreveport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jody Forman</td>
<td>Omaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodney Foxworth</td>
<td>Chelsea, Wilmington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith Langford</td>
<td>Chicago, Milwaukee, Fort Worth, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, San Antonio, Omaha, Savannah, District of Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitch Michkowski</td>
<td>Chicago, Milwaukee, Richmond, N.Charleston, Charleston, Richmond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lawrence Siegel | Ocala, Bradenton, Hillsborough, Tampa, Richmond
Andrew Sonner | Denver
Joseph Trotter | Charleston, N.Charleston, Chelsea, Wilmington, Mobile, Riviera Beach
David Tyus | Indianapolis, Holland, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Ocala, Bradenton, Tampa, Hillsborough, Shreveport
Jerry Wilson | Chicago, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Holland, San Diego, Santa Ana

For all but three sites (North Riviera Beach, Charleston and North Charleston, which were visited by two project staff members), at least one of the needs assessment team members was either a person with community program experience or a criminal justice practitioner.

D. Methodology

The first step in preparing for the needs assessment site visits was the review and distillation of background materials on the Weed and Seed national initiative and the evolution of the individual funded programs by project staff. This entailed a substantial amount of effort by both BJA/EOWS and Project personnel. The documentation collected and reviewed was diverse and voluminous: grant applications for all of the funded sites; GPM site visit reports for each site, if available; GAO and DOJ publications and reports relating to the initiation and evaluation/assessment of the national program; back issues of In-Sites, the newsletter of the Weed and Seed national initiative, published by EOWS; and quarterly progress reports of the funded programs, to name the major documentation. In addition, BJA and EOWS staff who had served as GPMs for the various funded sites made themselves available for scheduled interviews by project staff at BJA headquarters. This effort was essential to enabling the project to prepare the consultants who ultimately would be retained to conduct the needs assessment visit when the shifting schedule for launching of the site work phase of the project was firmly established. All of this material and interview information was distilled to prepare two documents: a standard Consultant's Handbook, containing background information on the national Weed and Seed initiative, early federal agency and contractor evaluation results of the
program, information on the federal partnership agencies, site visit protocols (refined in consultation with EOWS/BJA staff and ILJ) and project procedures; and a Site Manual, which was prepared for each of the 36 funded sites, containing information relating to the design and history of each program. As noted above, the Site Manuals were subsequently given to the national Weed and Seed technical assistance contractor for duplication and use in that follow-on effort.

In January, in anticipation of the notification of the sites by EOWS the pending needs assessment, the project assembled a core group of four consultants for an orientation on the national initiative, the needs assessment objectives, the site protocols and project procedures and logistics. As the (ultimately) seven additional consultants used on the project were identified and scheduled, they were given an abbreviated orientation by telephone after their review of the Consultant's Handbook.

Following the initial orientation, four sites were selected to pilot test project site work protocols and logistical procedures, and these were conducted at the end of January by two teams of three or four staff and consultants, each of which conducted two site visits back-to-back on one trip. Following these visits, the teams assembled at the project office to review and revise project procedures and reporting requirements.

The project staff subsequently briefed EOWS and BJA staff on the findings and results of the pilot visits. As a result of this meeting, it was agreed that the remainder of the sites would be contacted to schedule needs assessment visits and that increased emphasis would be placed on stressing the non-evaluative nature of the needs assessment with local personnel, in light of their almost inevitable assumption that the technical assistance needs assessment was an evaluation of their programs, in order to minimize declinations among the sites to participate in the needs assessment effort.

Although the initial contact by project staff at each site was either the U.S. Attorney or the Weed and Seed liaison person on his or her staff, detailed scheduling arrangements were made with the local program coordinator. The typical site visit of two days duration began with a meeting of
the team with the program coordinator and USAO Weed and Seed liaison officer, followed by a series of interviews at different locations with law enforcement and community police program representatives, members of the weed and the seed coordinating committees of the local program, neighborhood residents, service providers to the local program, and the local prosecutor or his or her representative. The final meeting of each site visit was with the program coordinator, the USAO program liaison staff member and the U.S. Attorney. This latter visit was both a reporting session on the team's findings/impressions and an opportunity for the team to invite the U.S. Attorney to express his or her views on technical assistance needs at the site.

The classification scheme designed to capture consultants' findings (based on interview responses and observations) during coordinated site visits was divided into six categories:

A = Program Management and Coordination  
B = Weed Strategy Activities  
C = Community Policing Activities  
D = Prevention, Intervention, Treatment Activities  
E = Community Development/Economic Revitalization Activities, and  
F = Federal Partner and Local Government Relations.

Although not a required part of the Needs Assessment undertaking, team members also were instructed by the project director to identify one or two activities at each site that were "noteworthy," in that they appeared to be innovative, well-executed and sufficiently documented to be of potential replication value to other jurisdictions. The objective here was to provide information for the national technical assistance contractor to follow-up on to validate the efficacy of the noted programs (or alternative ones) at the sites and collect more detailed information for the networking activities of the national Weed and Seed TA effort. The results of this preliminary documentation are presented in Appendix C, and are included in the Matrix database provided in the Paradox diskette appended to this report.
Over the course of the twelve-month Needs Assessment Project, many preliminary, midcourse and summary meetings were held between project staff and consulting personnel assigned to multiple site locations. In part, the purpose of these meetings was to highlight specific and overall impressions of each consultant's experiences during the course of their site visits. From these discussions evolved a "Technical Assistance and Training Needs Assessment Matrix" which listed for each site visited the following information for each need noted: TA/Training Need (classified in one of the six categories described above), Target Group, Description of TA/Training Response, and TA/Training Delivery Mechanisms. The possible technical assistance delivery mechanisms were nine:

- On-Site Consultant (OSC)
- On-Site Workshop (OSW)
- Regional Workshop (RW)
- National Conference (NC)
- Action by Executive Office of Weed and Seed (EOWS)
- Printed or Video Materials (P/VM)
- Hosted Site Visit (HSV)
- Local Initiative (LI)
- Electronic/On-Line (EOL)

Following development and distribution of the Matrix to EOWS and technical assistance contractor staff in WordPerfect format, the project re-entered the data into a Paradox 5.0 relational data base to facilitate updating, expansion and analysis of the Matrix information by government program managers and technical assistance service providers. The Matrix segments containing needs and response recommendations for each site is presented in Appendix A. A diskette containing the complete data base (including noteworthy programs and a memo field) for the visited sites in Paradox format is appended to the back cover of this report.
II. PRINCIPAL FINDINGS REGARDING TA AND TRAINING NEEDS

A. Overview

Each of the sites had their individual organizational and political dynamics that affected program development, as well as community perceptions of the program, but there were several remarkably similar impressions reported independently by virtually all of the project needs assessment teams:

- the weeding portions of the programs were essentially completed; seeding is now the challenge

- there is confusion or lack of consensus about what the Weed and Seed program is and the goals to be achieved

- a second or third generation of project directors is in place at many sites; there has been substantial turnover of staff and local officials, and the current ones often are not privy to the planning dynamics and expectations of the original program design

- there is no structure for seeding activities; for weeding, police provide structure but no organization to promote the seeding activities; TA is needed to facilitate development of structure for seeding activities

- many local (primarily city) fiscal policies/procedures slow, if not impede, flow of cash to local organizations

- a large proportion of W&S funds appear to be going to governmental entities (e.g.,
police, city/county government agencies) to support activities which are either going to be conducted anyway or will cease when federal funding stops -- they are not geared to long-term institutionalization.

- There is a need to develop employment strategies, not simply placement; this entails teaching people how to present for a job (how to dress, talk, etc.), computer literacy, as well as finding or developing employment opportunities.

- Volunteers are under-utilized or poorly utilized (i.e., inadequate recruitment, screening, training and retention).

The following subsections of this chapter summarize the major technical assistance and training needs identified in each of the six classifications of need areas.

B. Program Administration and Coordination

There are more technical assistance and training needs in this category than any of the other program components. Thirty percent of the needs identified for all sites related to program administration and coordination. At least one need in this area is indicated in each of the 27 sites visited, and the average for all sites of needs classified as relating to program administration and coordination was 4.5. The most frequent needs articulated by site representatives included: training in program design and evaluation, and in how to effectively sustain the Weed and Seed program once current funding has ended (i.e., transition planning capability); how to stimulate greater community (i.e., target area residents) involvement in the Weed and Seed program; improved communication between the local program representatives and national office administrators; and greater collaboration between community-based organizations in furthering the goals of the Weed and Seed program. Other frequently cited needs included the need for more information on how the federal partner agencies could help the Weed and Seed program at the site; the desire for knowledge about
methods and strategies to increase the involvement of churches and schools in the local program; training for program administrators in program design and evaluation; and better skills in identifying and developing leadership skills among neighborhood residents.

It was the almost universal consensus of project staff and consultants that a major need in this program category was for specialized training of program coordinators in how to promote and sustain change in a community. It appeared to us that for all of the interagency and inter-organizational challenges confronting these programs, the resource limitations that they all confront, and the great expectations placed on the coordinators to achieve program strategies and sustain momentum and vitality in the program, they have not been adequately prepared for the special role they must play as change agents in their communities. The effect of this lack of needed skills is compounded, with a few notable exceptions, in the case of those sites where the U.S. Attorney's Office liaison staff person, equally untrained, exercises a substantial degree of involvement in the program's development and influence over the program coordinators.

The assessment recommended that 61% of the needs in this program category were appropriate for response by on-site consultation and training and almost 30% by regional and national workshops (in some cases, in combination with on-site intervention). The needs in this area also called for a significant number of EOWS initiatives to resolve some problems, notably the communication issues and federal partner agency relations; but there were sufficient needs in this principal need area that the full panoply of technical assistance and training responses were deemed necessary to bring to bear, especially given the high turnover in program personnel at the sites.

C. Law Enforcement

The law enforcement components of the programs visited were clearly the most developed Weed and Seed program elements, and apparently received the brunt of the early years' funding at each site. The apparent impact of the Weed and Seed programs' law enforcement components also was the most well documented of the Weed and Seed program activities in each site, as data
collection and reporting on offenses reported and arrests made are established capabilities in most communities.

The most frequently expressed law enforcement or "weed strategy" technical assistance need was for training (surveillance techniques and "street survival" training programs) and for less red tape in applying for and expending asset forfeiture funds. As will be discussed in more detail below, one of the most prevalent need noted by the needs assessment teams (as opposed to local officials) in this program area was for a more systemic perspective in the planning and implementation of the "weeding strategy" of the programs. This would include the need for greater training for police officers in report writing skills to enhance the prosecution posture of lower-level drug arrests and a coordinated planning approach with judicial, prosecution and probation/parole agencies to provide better case tracking, more timely (and less overtime intensive) case processing of Weed and Seed neighborhood cases, and better interagency communication and intelligence. It seemed to the needs assessment teams that the concept of weeding was often confined to the investigation and arrest phases of the criminal case disposition process, with negative consequences for program efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

At 52 identified needs, the Law Enforcement (i.e., "weed") category accounted for 13% of the total needs for all sites. For 48 (92%) of these needs, on-site consultation or training were the recommended technical assistance modalities. This was the highest proportion of on-site responses recommended for any need category, and reflected the prevalence of local inter-agency communication/coordination problems among the "weed" program components at the visited sites. This category of needs also had the highest proportion (15%) of Hosted Site Visits recommended as a technical assistance response modality.

D. Community Policing

Where carried out with evident community orientation, community policing was the most well-received and recognized Weed and Seed program elements at the sites visited. It also evidenced
a very diverse range of permutations and of administrative support among the law enforcement leadership with whom the team members spoke. The major technical assistance needs expressed by community police officers were for training in such areas as street survival, cross-cultural communication, and problem solving; and for more interaction with and information about community-oriented policing techniques and experiences in other jurisdictions. Other prevalent needs noted by the team members included training for supervisory personnel in the COP concept (to improve their appreciation of the importance of continuity in officer deployment and non-traditional approaches to police involvement in community problem solving and advocacy) and cultural sensitivity training and language training for Community Policing officers. In some programs, the number of community police officers originally dedicated to the program neighborhood had been reduced because of budgetary shortages in the jurisdiction requiring their assignment to other aspects of local law enforcement operations.

Community Policing needs were the lowest in incidence (8%) of all of the needs categories. They also had a fairly high rate of suggested on-site responses (66%), but in more than half of these cases, regional workshops or other multi-jurisdiction technical assistance or training responses were deemed adequate to respond to the identified needs.

E. Prevention, Intervention, Treatment

This needs category accounted for 84 (20%) of the total number of needs identified at the visited sites, making it third in incidence among the various categories of needs (after program Administration and Economic Revitalization). This program element, however, was the most serious concern of neighborhood residents with whom team members spoke, particularly as it related to efforts directed at children and youth, such as: Safe Haven and organized recreational programs, remedial education, and substance abuse prevention and treatment programs. Other frequently cited needs in this area included leadership training for neighborhood residents, community organization development assistance, networking with other sites for ideas and reinforcement of local initiatives, and job skills development programs and job placement capabilities, as well as general substance
abuse treatment resources in, or easily accessed from, the target neighborhood.

While many of these needs in this category appear to be budgetary/resource needs rather than calling for a technical assistance or training response, it was evident to the project needs assessment teams that in most jurisdictions, enhancement of the abilities of selected program and neighborhood representatives in such skill areas as advocacy, planning, collaboration building, interagency outreach with such community-serving institutions as schools and churches, and effective recruitment and use of volunteers would go a long way toward mitigating the resource deficiencies in the areas noted. About 80% of the responses recommended for needs in this category entailed on-site consultation or training; another 10% of the needs were recommended for servicing through regional workshops. Thirty of the 84 needs were recommended for redress through multiple technical assistance modalities.

F. Community Development/Economic Revitalization

Economic revitalization was probably the most elusive of the Weed and Seed program goals for residents of most of the sites visited. This category of need represented almost 25% of the total of technical assistance needs identified at the sites (second only to the 30% of needs classified as Program Administration and Coordination). Needs in this area related to the need for development of advocacy and proposal writing skills, techniques for stimulation of small business development, and enhanced procedures for code enforcement and condemnation of nuisance and abandoned properties. The needs in this area were closely related to those in the categories of Prevention/Intervention/Treatment and Program Administration that had to do with development of the neighborhood organization infrastructure, stimulation of collaborative efforts, and attraction of outside resources to the target neighborhood. Of the 91 needs identified in this category, on-site consultation or training responses were suggested for 59 (65%) of them. This category of need also had the highest proportion of any category of Local Initiative responses recommended for identified needs: 13%
G. Federal Partner and Local Government Relations

Although this specific need category accounted for only 20 of the 400 needs listed in the project's Technical Assistance and Training Needs Matrix, concern about this aspect of the national initiative was voiced at every site visited, and for some of these sites the need was categorized under either Program Administration and Coordination or Economic Revitalization because of the context in which they were observed or voiced at those sites. The universal consensus of the project assessment team members is that this element of the national initiative has not significantly materialized in any of the Weed and Seed sites visited, that very few program administrators or USAO Weed and Seed program liaison staff had any confidence about being able to take advantage of this program supplement, and that the unrealized expectations in this area, at least in those jurisdictions where the local staff had been present at the launching of the Weed and Seed program, contributed greatly to the level of frustration and disappointment in the program at those sites.

Following are the five manifestations of problems in this need area that the assessment effort identified that are most amenable to direct or indirect action by EOWS:

1. Federal Partner Agencies

Project site visits indicated that very little, if any, activity in these sites is underway under the auspices of the other federal partnership agencies that joined the Department of Justice in launching the Weed and Seed initiative. In one site, we were actually told that representatives from partnership agencies attended an early Weed and Seed meeting in the jurisdiction simply to be polite but specifically stated they had no authority to commit any resources. As further discussed in Section V, below, the federal partnership commitment underlying the Weed and Seed program concept needs to be revitalized on a national level, with directives from the head of each of the partnership agencies to the cognizant official in each of the regional offices serving Weed and Seed sites to designate a liaison to actively participate in the Weed and Seed effort, participate in Steering Committee meetings, and provide whatever support is needed and feasible to promote success of local Weed and Seed initiatives.
2. **Coordination with the Judicial System**

In virtually every Weed and Seed site visited, there appeared to be no regular communication or coordination of weed and seed activities with the local judicial system and the repercussions of this gap were evident in a number of areas. The effectiveness of weeding activities is clearly dependent upon judicial system processing of the criminal cases resulting. In a number of communities, local residents noted their frustration at their perceived failure of the court system to follow-up on the arrests being made as a result of weeding and other law enforcement activities.

For prosecutors, however, it was difficult to justify an expedited prosecution for cases arising in the Weed and Seed neighborhood, as opposed to other areas of the city, unless special funds had been allocated in the grant to support an enhancement of office resources to support such expedited processing. In some jurisdictions, it appears that, initially, there may have been an allocation for additional prosecutorial resources to handle Weed and Seed neighborhood cases when the budgets were originally developed. However, during the course of budget and program revisions and changes in Weed and Seed administrative staff, these allocations have, for the most part, been revised with the result that, in many sites, local prosecutors are not actively participating in the Weed and Seed projects and, in fact, may be only vaguely aware of their existence.

In no jurisdictions visited did we find any effort to involve the court system in the program and to develop any special mechanisms for docketing cases from the Weed and Seed areas, notifying victims of their status, or recognizing how the particular case might support or promote Weed and Seed activities. This lack of coordination was particularly evident in two areas: (1) the handling of misdemeanor and ordinance violation "quality of life" crimes, such as trespassing, excessive noise, etc.; and (2) the handling of code violation cases. Under traditional court administration practice, cases in these categories would be considered of secondary priority to major felonies and civil litigation. However, in the Weed and Seed areas, cases in these categories are often critical to achieving Weed and Seed program objectives. Again and again, neighborhood leaders stressed the close linkage between blight and crime -- between excessive noises, cars on blocks, abandoned houses, etc. and the development and escalation of criminal activity and deterioration of
local neighborhoods. The aggressive prosecution of these cases is, in the perception of many Weed and Seed community leaders, the key to reclaiming and revitalizing their neighborhood. Judicial system leaders, therefore, need to be apprized of Weed and Seed activities in their jurisdiction and the community priorities regarding litigation arising in these areas.

3. **Relationship Between Weed and Seed Programs and Drug Courts**

Drug Courts -- specially developed court calendars designed to provide intensive and continuous judicially supervised treatment, mandatory periodic drug testing, and the use of graduated sanctions and other rehabilitation services for nonviolent substance addicted offenders -- are rapidly developing in many jurisdictions. Over 200 are now either operational or in the planning stages. Among the 36 funded weed and seed sites, drug courts exist or are about to become operational in 20 and it is likely, given the new round of federal funding coupled with the reduced recidivism and drug usage that these programs are demonstrating, that many more programs will be underway shortly.

Weed and seed programs and drug courts share many common goals and, working together, can mutually reinforce each other. One of the most persistent needs identified by residents of Weed and Seed neighborhoods was for adequate treatment resources; drug courts can not only make treatment services available but, with the added intervention of the drug court judge, can both assist with and profit from the mobilization of community resources integral to weed and seed programs. Similarly, drug courts rely on linking participants with community-based initiatives, including community service programs, neighborhood revitalization projects, etc. The abundance of community programs underway in Weed and Seed neighborhoods can provide a ready referral resource for the drug court judge while, at the same time, both benefitting the neighborhood and integrating isolated community projects into the integrated system of services being developed by the drug court programs.
4. **Coordination of Weed and Seed and Comprehensive Communities Programs**

In several of the sites (Wilmington, Boston and Hartford, for example), for example, both Weed and Seed neighborhood oriented and the broader Comprehensive Community Program activities are underway. There appears, however, to be little coordination of these initiatives and no communication between residents and organizations active in each of the programs despite their apparent common interests and goals. Efforts should be made to integrate these initiatives and we understand efforts have already begun in some jurisdictions to accomplish this.

5. **Relationship Between the EOWS and the Program Sites**

The relationship that has developed between most of the local Weed and Seed programs visited and the Executive Office of Weed and Seed needs to be improved. To varying degrees and for a variety of reasons, tensions have developed. In part, these are a product of the multiple levels of administration applicable to most of the programs; in part, they are the result of multiple changes in personnel and modifications of original program budgets to comply with federal, state or local requirements. A number of the programs noted they had been operating for periods without any funding and several indicated at the time of our visit that current funding was about to expire and local officials had no idea of whether program funding would be continued and, if so, at what level. The federal government furloughs that had occurred during the period of the needs assessment visits further exacerbated these tensions, with instances frequently reported to us of telephone calls and correspondence to the EOWS unanswered.

Specific recommended areas for remedial action, further discussed in Section V, include: (1) development of closer relationships between the GPM and local Weed and Seed program administrator in regard to addressing budget and procurement issues (particularly significant with the numerous community-based organizations intended to participate in the Weed and Seed activities) and developing a mutual understanding of what the EOWS expects of the local coordinators in terms of overall program achievements, activities, and reporting; and (2) development of networking and other inter-site communication mechanisms to promote the interchange of ideas and experiences.
Ironically, although drug courts were operational in nine of the 27 Weed and Seed jurisdictions\(^1\) visited by the needs assessment teams, in only one jurisdiction (Mobile) did it appear that there was any coordination between the drug court and the Weed and Seed program. Even more surprising was the expressed need for treatment services in many of the jurisdictions in which drug courts operated without any apparent working knowledge of their operation by Weed and Seed program officials or residents. Drug Courts also were operational in four\(^2\) of the nine additional Weed and Seed sites that did not wish to participate in the needs assessment and, although the needs assessment team had no contact with the Weed and Seed programs in these jurisdictions, our involvement with the drug courts in these sites has not indicated any awareness on the part of drug court officials of the potential role that Weed and Seed initiatives can play in the program.

\(^1\) Chelsea, MA; Chicago, IL; Denver, CO; Fort Worth, TX; Mobile, AL; Santa Ana, CA; Tampa, FL; Washington, DC; and Wilmington, DL.

\(^2\) Las Vegas, NV; Los Angeles, CA; Phoenix, AZ; and Seattle, WA.
III. PRIORITIZATION OF TA AND TRAINING NEEDS

A. Overview

Project staff distilled the site reports of the needs assessment teams and summarized the TA and training needs identified at each site in a matrix (Appendix A), which also listed the intended target group to receive the services and the suggested modality for service delivery. During July and August, each of the 27 Weed and Seed sites visited were sent the matrix section for their programs and asked to validate and prioritize the technical assistance and training needs identified during the course of the needs assessment site visits. They were asked to indicate their priorities in terms of their urgency, using the following codes:

- **I** = immediate needs
- **H** = needs for which response was desired within the next three months
- **M** = needs for which response was desired within the next six months
- **L** = needs not essential to program success, but which would further program goals if addressed within the next year.

Responses were received from 12 of the 27 sites. Ten of these provided their prioritization of the TA and training recommendations and two others (Shreveport and Milwaukee) providing only commentary and update information. The Weed and Seed sites providing responses were:

- Chelsea, Massachusetts
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Omaha, Nebraska
- Richmond, Virginia
- Fort Worth, Texas
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- North Riviera Beach, Florida
In all, 129 TA and training needs had been listed in the matrix sections for the ten responding sites providing information on priorities. Forty-three (33%) of these were identified by the sites as immediate needs; 32 (25%) were identified as warranting response within the next three months; 36 (28%) were identified as warranting response within the next six months; and only 18 (14%) were deemed by the local jurisdictions as not essential to program success although they would further program goals.

Although less than half of the visited sites provided validation (44%) or validation and prioritization data (37%), the sites that did respond were sufficiently representative, in terms of the need profiles of the universe of visited sites, that the priorities indicated in various program categories are likely reflective of the priorities nationally. The table below illustrates the similarity of the respondent sites and all sites with respect to TA and training needs:

**Comparison of Needs of Respondent Sites And All Sites, by Need Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. Of Needs: All Sites</strong></td>
<td>121 (33%)</td>
<td>52 (13%)</td>
<td>32 (8%)</td>
<td>84 (21%)</td>
<td>91 (23%)</td>
<td>20 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. Of Needs: Respondent Sites</strong></td>
<td>43 (33%)</td>
<td>19 (15%)</td>
<td>11 (9%)</td>
<td>26 (20%)</td>
<td>28 (22%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. Of All Sites with This Need</strong></td>
<td>27 (100%)</td>
<td>21 (78%)</td>
<td>19 (71%)</td>
<td>22 (81%)</td>
<td>25 (93%)</td>
<td>10 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. Of Respondent Sites with this Need</strong></td>
<td>10 (100%)</td>
<td>6 (60%)</td>
<td>5 (50%)</td>
<td>8 (80%)</td>
<td>10 (100%)</td>
<td>2 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The priorities assigned by the responding sites to the needs set forth in the matrix sections for their programs, by classification of need, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>13 (30%)</td>
<td>6 (32%)</td>
<td>4 (36%)</td>
<td>11 (42%)</td>
<td>9 (32%)</td>
<td>0 (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (3 months)</td>
<td>9 (21%)</td>
<td>4 (21%)</td>
<td>5 (45%)</td>
<td>6 (23%)</td>
<td>7 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (6 months)</td>
<td>10 (23%)</td>
<td>5 (26%)</td>
<td>1 (9%)</td>
<td>7 (27%)</td>
<td>12 (43%)</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (12 months)</td>
<td>11 (26%)</td>
<td>4 (21%)</td>
<td>1 (9%)</td>
<td>2 (8%)</td>
<td>0 (-)</td>
<td>0 (-)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the respondent sites classified 58% of the needs identified by the project assessment teams as of immediate or high priority (which should be addressed within the next three months); 28% of intermediate priority (requiring response within the next six months); and 14% as low priority. Among the need classifications, those relating to community policing, prevention, intervention and treatment, and economic revitalization have the greatest proportion of highly ranked needs.

The specific TA and training needs validated and prioritized by the responding Weed and Seed sites are presented in Appendix B. [The letters from program representatives in Shreveport and Milwaukee, which essentially validate but do not rank the needs contained in the Matrix are presented in Appendix C.] Below is a synopsis of the relative urgency of the TA and Training needs noted by the responding sites and the program areas involved.

B. Needs Identified as Immediate

The responding sites cumulatively identified 43 (one-third) of the 129 identified TA and training needs for their jurisdictions as immediate. Thirteen (30%) of these fell under the category of program management and coordination, many of which dealt with the need to clarify Weed and Seed program objectives and local understanding of what the Weed and Seed programs were designed to achieve. An additional 20 (46%) of the immediate TA and training needs fell within the
categories of prevention, intervention and treatment (11) and community development/economic revitalization activities (9). The remaining 25% of immediate needs dealt with weed strategy activities (6) and community policing activity (4).

C. Needs to be Addressed Within the Next 3 Months

Thirty-two (25%) of the 129 identified needs were designated as requiring TA or training intervention within the next three months. In descending order of frequency, nine (28%) of these related to program management and coordination; seven to community development/economic revitalization; six to prevention, intervention and treatment; five to community policing; four to weed strategy activities; and one to federal partner relations.

D. Needs to be Addressed Within the Next Six Months

In terms of 36 needs designated by the sites as requiring a response within the next six months, one-third (12) related to community development/economic revitalization. An additional 28% (10) related to program management and coordination, with the balance relating to prevention/intervention/treatment (7); weed strategy activities (5); community policing (1) and federal partner relations (1).

E. Low Priority Needs

By far, the majority of needs identified as "not essential to program success but would further program goals" fell into the category of program management and coordination (11, or 61%). An additional 22% (4) fell into the category of weed strategy activities; and the remainder were in the categories of community policing (1) and prevention/intervention/treatment (2). No needs identified in the categories of community development/economic revitalization activities or federal partner relations were rated as low priority.
F. Summary

The prioritization of TA and training needs reflected in the data provided by the responding sites depicts both the diversity of developmental stages and needs reflected in the Weed and Seed programs as well as some common needs observed by the consultants in most of the Weed and Seed sites. Program Management and Coordination, for example, is as frequently cited as an "immediate" need as it is a "non essential" one. The range of perspectives on the urgency of responding to identified needs in this program area may reflect the broad range of program development in the various sites as well as the lack of awareness in some of the less developed sites of deficiencies in this area. Clearly, Prevention/Intervention/Treatment activities, on the other hand, are persistent needs shared -- and recognized -- by all of the sites. In any event, the prioritization listings in those jurisdictions which have responded, and the process of developing priorities in those jurisdictions which have not, should provide an important framework for local jurisdictions to assess the Weed and Seed activities that have been conducted and the direction for future program development.
IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on a review and analysis of the needs assessment site visits, the following recommendations are offered for the consideration of the reorganized EOWS and its technical assistance contractors as they refine a national strategy to respond to the technical assistance and training needs of the existing and newly funded Weed and Seed sites during FY 1997:

(1) Each EOWS program manager should review the fiscal and organizational status of each Weed and Seed grant with the local program Steering Committee, covering such issues as:

(a) budget: how resources are being allocated; percent for weeding and percent for seeding; proportion going to community organizations vs. government agencies; and cashflow history (e.g., how easy/frequent is it for funds to flow to local community organizations);
(b) organizational responsibility and staffing dedicated to Weed and Seed initiatives;
(c) expectations of local officials for the program (see, also, No. 2, below);
(d) review of each program currently operating and its budget and operational status (to catch initiatives that are thriving and those about to fail, etc.); and
(e) impediments to smooth fiscal and administrative operations which may impact the grantee's ability to effectively implement the Weed and Seed program.

(2) Develop a succinct description of the Weed and Seed program for local officials, program managers and others involved in the Weed and Seed initiative that explains what the Weed and Seed program is designed to achieve and takes into account the high turnover in local program managers that has occurred in most sites since the
Weed and Seed program began. This description also should provide a framework to review and refine local program materials, develop media strategies to build local understanding and support for continuing and supplementing currently available resources. This description should also:

(a) include principal objectives, suggested performance/self-assessment measures for various Weed and Seed initiatives (e.g., new business openings, truancy rates, emergency room admissions for drug overdoses, calls for police services, etc.);

(b) explain how evaluation fits into the total program design (e.g., ways to evaluate specific Weed and Seed components as well as the program as a whole, including various statistical measures that might be used and how the results of evaluation/assessment activities can be used to modify and improve program operations (e.g., are weeding activities resulting in a high rate of prosecution of persons arrested, or are cases being dropped, and if the latter is the case, what procedural or training responses can be implemented to improve the prosecution posture of Weed and Seed neighborhood cases?).

(c) provide a concise framework for the overall Weed and Seed effort, including program design, monitoring, refinement of program design and operations, etc., and the relationship of "quality of life" activities (e.g., abandoned automobile removal, aggressive response to housing code violations, etc.) to crime reduction activities.

(3) Develop and facilitate a process for local officials to revisit and refine or revise the goals and priorities of the Weed and Seed program, taking into account: (a) the changing needs of the community that have emerged since the initial Weed and Seed application; (b) the impact of initial Weed and Seed activities on the overall program strategy; and (c) the needs of community groups that may not have been
involved in the initial Weed and Seed program design. This revisiting of Weed and Seed goals and priorities also should take into account the appropriate structure for the local program to sustain the Weed and Seed initiatives once the federal Weed and Seed funding steam has run its course.

(4) Work with local steering committees and other officials to look at the local Weed and Seed program systemically to identify major gaps that need to be addressed. Many individual initiatives have been launched, but it is important now to look at how they fit into a systematic process. For example, is the impact of the weeding activities or the neighborhood restoration activities on the court system planned for and addressed?

(5) Develop a Weed and Seed "Program Brief" that can explain the generic concept and operation of the Weed and Seed program for a variety of audiences desiring or needing an overview of the Weed and Seed program. The Program Brief should describe the program's goals, critical elements, performance measures, and common strategies, and synthesize the various activities undertaken in number 2, above.

(6) Educate the residents of each Weed and Seed site as to the goals, variety of activities, and anticipated outcomes contemplated for the Weed and Seed program. In other words, what does the Weed and Seed program entail, and what is the range of activities and organizations that need to be involved.

(7) Coordinate all of the various outside groups (e.g., technical assistance and training providers, evaluators) that are visiting the Weed and Seed sites and let the sites know how these various groups fit into and support the Weed and Seed program, when they may be coming, purpose of their visits, and how the local site officials should interface with and make use of these resources.
(8) Examine the budget for the Weed and Seed program in each site, and make sure, at this point in the programs' evolution, that the bulk of the federal funds is going to seeding and not to police to do what they already are doing. Identify the impediments in each site to maximizing the flow of funds to local organizations (e.g., local fiscal requirements, contracting procedures, etc.). Provide guidance as to what might be an acceptable formula for allocating grant funds to the various Weed and Seed components.

(9) Develop and reaffirm, from a national perspective, the commitment of the supporting "federal partner agencies" to the Weed and Seed program and develop meaningful strategies to assure meaningful involvement of these agencies in each jurisdiction.

(10) Identify and document "notable" projects and activities in each jurisdiction that might be of interest to other Weed and Seed sites. Perhaps using the "notable programs" information contained in the database provided by the American University needs assessment effort as a starting point, develop succinct descriptions of these projects and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of individuals to contact for further information. This data should at least be available on a Weed and Seed Program homepage, and a new section identified as "Noteworthy Programs" containing such information on fifteen or twenty such programs might be developed for inclusion in each issue of "In-Sites" to increase its networking value to the national Weed and Seed community.

(11) Review the interrelationship of Weed and Seed initiatives with the justice system process in each jurisdiction to assure that the justice system is cognizant of and supportive of the Weed and Seed initiative. For example, is the court system processing cases initiated through weeding activities? Are the justice system's case processing priorities consistent with those of the Weed and Seed initiative relative
to code enforcement, low level drug cases, etc.?

(12) Promote skills enhancement training programs for residents in each Weed and Seed neighborhood, with the objective of building the self-confidence and abilities of the participating community members and empower them to meaningfully participate in community development programs over the long term, including economic revitalization programs, which at the time of the needs assessment visits, were almost non-existent. These training programs should complement job-readiness training programs underway and should include computer literacy, grantsmanship, project accounting principles, skills in dealing with bureaucracies, etc.

(13) Integrate treatment and rehabilitation resources and programs into the Weed and Seed efforts. There are many treatment and rehabilitation programs underway in Weed and Seed jurisdictions, but in most cases, they do not appear to be integrated into the Weed and Seed initiatives.

(14) Policies and procedures for accessing asset forfeiture resources at each Weed and Seed site should be documented, and efforts to make these resources available to support Weed and Seed programs should be facilitated in each jurisdiction.

(15) Training programs should be launched on how to recruit, screen, train, use, and retain volunteers in Weed and Seed program activities. There is a tremendous pool of talented volunteers in each Weed and Seed jurisdiction who already are working to support Weed and Seed initiatives, and many more that are available.

(16) Weed and Seed initiatives should be integrated with Drug Court Programs in Jurisdictions where drug courts exist. It is suggested that, in each jurisdiction in which a drug court is currently operating, that the Weed and Seed program director contact the Drug Court judge and provide him/her with a brief orientation
to the local Weed and Seed program, the local resources being developed and the needs being addressed. Efforts to link Weed and Seed "seeding" as well as "weeding" initiatives with the treatment services and rehabilitation efforts of local drug courts should be encouraged. Weed and Seed steering committees, local drug court judges and local drug court task forces need to work together, as appropriate, to address common issues and pursue common goals, where appropriate. In jurisdictions where no drug court currently operates, the Weed and Seed Steering committee should consider the desirability of contacting the local prosecutor and chief judge to discuss the potential utility and feasibility of developing a drug court and how such a program can support -- and be supported by -- the Weed and Seed initiatives.

(17) Similar to number 16, above, the Weed and Seed effort in those jurisdictions that also are CCP program sites should be closely coordinated and have some degree of overlapping policy oversight, both for reasons of program efficiency and to obviate the confusion and unnecessary competition that presently prevails in the sites where both co-exist.

(18) A special "change agent" curriculum, emphasizing planning, negotiation and facilitation skills and the use of innovation and resourcefulness in achieving program goals and objectives, should be developed and provided on a regional basis to program coordinators and project directors at both the funded and officially recognized sites (at least two persons from each site). While many of the program administrators are experienced and comfortable with working with community-level groups and neighborhood-level organization activities, as well as police agencies, few appeared skilled in working effectively with the broader official bureaucracy in their jurisdictions or proficient in fashioning alternative courses of action when faced with funding shortages or unexpected obstacles to program progress. A training program of this nature, perhaps consisting of two three-day sessions over the course of the fiscal year, would do much to increase the self-
confidence and performance of the well-motivated and talented people who staff these programs and would substantially enhance the level of productive interjurisdictional networking among programs. It also would be a valuable additional legacy of the national Weed and Seed initiative in the jurisdictions it has reached.
V. CONCLUSION

The national Weed and Seed Program is one of the most exciting initiatives to be launched by the Federal Government. Its goal of integrating law enforcement, public safety, and community revitalization efforts in neighborhood-based programs is a forerunner of the current expanded interest in the "community justice" concept. At this point in its existence, the national Weed and Seed Program is still developing, with many random activities underway in the various sites but little infrastructure tying them together.

The recommendations outlined in this report are designed to give direction to the urgently needed task of developing a systematic approach for furthering the sound development of Weed and Seed activities in the various sites. They are also designed to address issues beyond the control of the sites that emanate from the nature of the Weed and Seed Program design itself: the "federal partnership agency" program element upon which the Weed and Seed concept relies; the federal-state-local relationships applicable to program implementation; and the need to integrate neighborhood-based initiatives into city-wide programs and policies and political framework.

Most of the Weed and Seed sites reviewed during the course of this project are ripe for reassessing and updating the local goals and strategies necessary to achieving the promise of the Weed and Seed concept. Most of them now have staff in place to provide direction and follow-through for the variety of Weed and Seed initiatives that need to be launched. The Government Program Managers, however, must take the lead in establishing true collaborative relationships with the local program coordinators, and work with them to address a myriad of programmatic, budgetary, policy, and administrative and inter-agency issues that have heretofore brought some programs to a standstill. In many jurisdictions, the individuals now associated with Weed and Seed activities are new and unfamiliar with the planning dynamics and program aspirations prevailing at the time the program was launched.
In addition, local judicial system agencies must be brought into the Weed and Seed planning process and be apprised of program goals and priorities. At the same time, Weed and Seed program leaders need to recognize that the judicial system cannot arbitrarily give greater attention to cases arising from a specific neighborhood, unless extra resources are provided and the special efforts to facilitate Weed and Seed program goals do not diminish the agencies' services to the community as a whole.