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Views of Small Community Water Systems on Partnerships and Partnership-Related Policies

Results from a Nationwide Survey

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About This Report:

This report is part of larger project that investigates the effects of top-down policies designed to encourage partnership formation among organizations. The extent to which policies lead to partnership formation will depend on whether partnerships benefit organizations as well as whether policies intervene to address the factors inhibiting partnership formation. This report synthesizes responses from a nation-wide survey of small community water systems about their views on this topic, while other parts of the project examine the influence of organizational structure, culture, capacity, and asset specificity on the potential benefits of partnerships and the effectiveness of policies designed to foster partnership formation.

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Executive Summary

Small community water systems — those serving populations of 10,000 or fewer — account for more than 92% of the community water systems (CWS) in the United States. While many of these small CWS operate effectively, others face significant technical, managerial, and financial challenges. Partnerships, in the form of collaborative agreements among small CWS or between a small CWS and another organization, represent one potential mechanism for expanding limited capacities. Recognizing this potential, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state governments have adopted a range of policies designed to foster partnership formation. However, partnerships may not be useful to all CWS and there may be drawbacks to partnership formation. To better support small CWS, policymakers need to understand whether and how these systems benefit from partnerships and what drives or discourages their participation in collaborative agreements.

This report presents findings from a national survey of small CWS (response rate 13%). Findings reveal substantial heterogeneity among small CWS in their operational challenges, their expectations of partnership benefits, and their responses to state policies designed to encourage partnership formation.

Key takeaways from the survey include:

- **Operational challenges:** Approximately one-third of respondents report no operational challenges. Another one-third report substantial or extreme challenges, most commonly: financing infrastructure upgrades; hiring and retaining qualified operators; and maintaining regulatory compliance.
- **Expectations of partnership benefits:** More than one-third of respondents anticipate no benefits from partnerships. However, responses indicate potential alignment between reported challenges and expected partnership benefits in the areas of financing and human resources, suggesting partnerships may be useful strategies for small CWS confronting these challenges.
- **Partnership preferences:** Respondents favor informal arrangements and contracting over consolidation and expressed significant concern about loss of control, dependence on outside entities, liability, and equity implications of partnerships.
- **Response to state policies:** State policies designed to encourage partnerships have had, at most, a moderate reach. Factors contributing to this limited effect include widespread lack of awareness of existing policies, the narrow scope of many policies, a lack of attention within policies to the drawbacks to partnership formation, and insufficient levels of support.

In sum, while partnerships can be useful for some small CWS, they are not a one-size-fits-all solution. To better support the small CWS that stand to gain from partnerships, states will need to adapt, redesign, and potentially supplement existing policies to more effectively reach the relevant small CWS. Recognizing that partnerships are just one tool, states should also consider expanding the range of mechanisms available to help small CWS address the challenges they face.

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1. Introduction

This report presents results from a survey of small CWS across the United States about the challenges they encounter, the potential benefits they expect to derive from partnerships, and the effects policies in their state have had on their consideration of partnerships. Results are provided at two scales: (1) a national-level synthesis in the main report, and (2) state-level summaries in the appendix. These findings provide a snapshot of the views of thousands of small CWS in the United States and can help policymakers and state agencies tailor their efforts to the needs and realities of small CWS.

2. Small Water Systems and Partnerships

Access to safe, reliable drinking water is critical for public health, the economy, and quality of life. Clean drinking water reduces the risk of waterborne diseases and supports essential needs, such as food preparation and personal hygiene. Communities of all sizes need dependable water supplies to provide municipal services, support sustainable economic growth, and keep infrastructure safe by allowing for fire suppression. In the United States, most drinking water is delivered through local piped-supply systems, with 90% of the population receiving water from community water systems (CWS).¹ More than 92% of the approximately 51,000 CWS in the United States are small (American Water Works Association 2025), meaning they serve populations of 10,000 or fewer (EPA 2022). While many of these small CWS are located in rural communities and areas outside metropolitan statistical areas, small CWS are also located within the heart of urban areas, even adjacent to or within large metropolitan centers served by larger drinking water systems (EPA 2025a). Due to the history of water supply development in the United States, the structures for ownership and operations of small CWS are highly diverse. Small CWS may be publicly owned by local governmental entities, such as municipalities, townships, counties, or special districts. Alternatively, they may be community-owned through cooperatives or home-owners associations. Small CWS may also be privately owned by small proprietors, such as the owner of a mobile home park, or by large investor-owned corporations.

While many small CWS in the United States are functioning well, others struggle to consistently ensure reliable and high-quality service (Blanchard and Eberle 2013; Fedinick et al. 2017). Small CWS account for a majority of Safe Drinking Water Act violations nationwide (Rubin 2013; Fedinick et al. 2017; Fedinick et al. 2019), in part because small CWS frequently lack the technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity necessary for sustainable operations. Human-resource constraints are particularly acute, as small CWS often struggle to recruit and retain certified operators, frequently relying on part-time staff

¹ In the United States, public water systems are those that provide service to 25 or more persons daily or possess 15 or more service connections and operate 60 days or more out of the year. Community water systems are a subset of public water system that provide water service to the same population year-round (EPA 2025b).

or volunteer boards with limited expertise to address complex systemic deficiencies (Nylen, Pannu, and Kiparsky 2018; Blanchard and Eberle 2013; McFarlane and Harris 2018). Operational costs are also a growing burden. Across the United States, an estimated \$2.1 to \$2.5 trillion in total investment (American Water Works Association 2026) is needed over the next 25 years to ensure water-system reliability. The operating costs of small CWS, including asset management, replacing aging infrastructure, and remediating decades of deferred maintenance (Congressional Research Service 2023; Circle of Blue 2022), account for approximately 18% of the estimated total investment need (EPA 2023a).

Partnerships — in the form of collaborative agreements between and among small CWS and/or other organizations — are a possible mechanism through which small CWS can expand their limited technical, managerial, and financial capacities. By making it possible to share resources, expertise, equipment, or infrastructure, partnerships may enable small CWS to address deficiencies in supply (water availability or quality) and/or infrastructure and improve preparedness for and responsiveness to emergency events (EPA 2017; Riggs and Hughes 2019; Martin 2009). Partnerships may also lead to efficiencies. Many activities small CWS must undertake, such as meter reading, billing, and collections, and purchasing supplies, become more cost effective as scale increases. Moreover, spreading costs over a larger population may enable small CWS to overcome the diseconomies of scale that commonly plague small water systems. Partnerships that jointly purchase or share staff and equipment can also lower costs by eliminating duplicative efforts. By collaborating on staffing, partnerships may enable small CWS to replace untrained, part-time, or volunteer staff with trained professionals. Sharing knowledge, expertise, and experience may also help build managerial and technical capacity. Lastly, partnerships can help small CWS leverage additional resources. For example, by demonstrating that outcomes of proposed projects will benefit a larger service population, small CWS could become more competitive for state and federal funding to support those projects.

Partnerships among small CWS can take a variety of forms (Table 1), ranging from flexible, non-binding arrangements to full legal mergers. These collaborations may occur as standalone efforts or as steps within a strategy of regionalization — meaning efforts to develop an integrated framework for water services across jurisdictions, communities, or service areas. At one end of the spectrum, informal partnerships allow entities to support one another without the constraints of a contract. More structured partnerships may involve formal agreements around short or long-term technical or service contracts, collective hiring of technical personnel, or joint management of infrastructure. In the most integrated form, a partnership may entail consolidation, in which two or more systems merge. Consolidation could include a larger system subsuming a neighboring system or two or more systems combining physical and/or operational and managerial functions. Partnerships can occur across diverse sets of agencies, including utility-to-utility partnerships and utility-to-non-water agencies, such as consulting firms and technical or laboratory companies.

Table 1: Types of Partnerships

Adapted from (Milman, James, and Macuch 2023; EPA 2023b)

Definitions	Examples
Consolidation Ownership is transferred or changed.	One water system is taken over by or subsumed into another. One or more water systems are merged into a single new entity.
Joint Ownership Small CWs formally engage in joint operations or management of some aspects of the system. Each water system otherwise remains independent.	Water systems share a water source or treatment facility.
Shared Staff Small CWS make joint hires of staff who will work across both systems.	An operator or manager is employed through a joint agreement between one or more systems, each sharing employment responsibilities.
Contract of Service Small CWS contract another water system or a other organization to provide a service.	A water system hires another entity to conduct engineering analysis, operations, management, water quality monitoring, or billing. A water system purchases treated source water.
Informal Small CWS work together without legal obligations, relying on memorandums of understanding or verbal agreements.	Water systems provide one another mutual aid during an emergency or engage in ad hoc sharing of equipment. Water systems provide one another peer to peer advice.

Yet even while partnerships have the potential to offer a variety of benefits, they are not a one-size-fits-all solution. Partnerships may not be useful when (1) they do not address the specific challenges faced by small CWS, (2) the costs and risks of partnership formation outweigh the potential benefits of partnerships, or (3) there are institutional, social and political barriers to partnership formation (Hansen, Mullin, and Riggs 2020; Environmental Finance Center 2026). For example, while economies of scale are a potential benefit of partnerships, the cost advantages they offer have limits and may be contingent on the types (e.g., capital vs labor vs energy) of costs shared (González-Gómez and García-Rubio 2008; Klien and Michaud 2019). Moreover, partnerships cannot address regional problems, such as a water shortage due to extended drought or a labor shortage. Working across organizational boundaries also requires time, capacity, and effort. Further, collaboration can bring about new risks, including loss of control, shifts in liability, loss of institutional knowledge, and free riding, among others (Lieberherr, Huesker, and Pakizer 2022). There may also be barriers to partnership formation. The regulatory structure of the drinking water sector may increase the transaction costs of navigating the legal and administrative

aspects of a partnership (Norriss et al. 2021; Eskaf and Moreau 2009; McFarlane and Harris 2018). The capital intensity and asset specificity of water systems mean that investments are hard to redeploy elsewhere if the partnership fails (Andrew 2009). The fee-based model of water-system service may constrain the division of benefits across partners. Geography can constrain the potential for water system partnerships that involve physical interconnections. Lastly, the non-substitutable nature of water provision may affect political willingness to partner, as small CWS have a history and a culture of independence (Masten 2010) and partnerships may increase concerns about autonomy (Beecher et al. 1996; Bel and Warner 2015).

In recognition of potential barriers to partnership formation, and to encourage small CWS to consider them as a potential strategy, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state governments across the United States have adopted a diversity of policies designed to foster partnerships. These policies employ common mechanisms used by higher-levels of government to steer local action, including mandating partnerships, offering incentives, building awareness, providing information, and removing legal or institutional barriers to partnership formation (Milman, James, and Macuch 2023). States vary in the policies they have adopted, with many implementing multiple policies concurrently.

Despite this growing policy attention to small CWS, relatively little is known about their perspectives on partnerships, including what might make them more, or less, inclined to participate in them. Understanding the perspectives of small CWS on potential benefits and drawbacks to partnerships is key to the success of policy interventions designed to promote them.

3. Survey Methodology

We conducted a survey of small CWS across the United States to determine their perspectives on partnerships and state-level policies designed to foster partnership formation.

3.1. Survey Content

Survey questions were designed to capture respondent perspectives on several aspects of partnership:

- The nature of and extent of challenges they experience
- The types and magnitude of benefits they expect they might gain from partnerships
- Concerns they have about the drawbacks of and barriers to partnership formation
- Their prior experience with partnerships
- The effects of policies within their states
- The likely impact of additional policy interventions on their consideration of partnerships

The questionnaire also allowed for respondents to provide open-ended comments.

The survey instrument was consistent across states, except for the questions eliciting respondent views on state policies designed to foster partnership formation. To account for variation between states in state-level policies, the survey instrument was tailored to reflect the specific policies in recipients' states. An initial list of each state's policies was compiled based on the EPA's database (EPA 2017). This list was reviewed and updated through interviews with officials from the agency in each state that oversees drinking water systems. A detailed methodology for interviews and data elicitation is described in Milman, James, and Macuch 2023. While state officials verified the list of policies during interviews, in some instances officials voiced uncertainty about their knowledge. It is also possible some policies changed between when officials were interviewed and the survey was deployed.

3.2. Survey Sampling and Deployment

The EPA's Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS) database (EPA 2020) contains information on every CWS in the United States. A list of all active CWS was downloaded in 2023. This list was filtered to include only small CWS — those serving populations of 10,000 or fewer.

The survey was sent to the point of contact listed for each small CWS within the SDWIS database. Typically an owner, manager, or primary operator, the listed contact is the individual responsible for communicating about the system's regulatory compliance and thus someone who should have substantial knowledge of the CWS. Contacted individuals were able to work jointly with other individuals in the organization when filling out the survey. As contact information for CWS in Texas and Washington state are not included in SDWIS, contacts for small CWS were obtained from the state agency that oversees drinking water in those states. This contact information was merged with the SDWIS list using the unique identifier (PWSID) assigned by the EPA to each drinking water system.

Sometimes a single utility or company operates multiple drinking water systems, as when a private company owns multiple systems, a town owns more than one system, or a single entity is contracted to operate multiple systems. Each of these examples reflects a type of partnership. In cases where a single entity owns or operates more than one system, one of those systems was randomly identified as the system for that entity to consider when responding to the survey to avoid sending multiple copies to the same person. While this method improves clarity about the survey response and reduces the frustration of respondents when asked to respond multiple times to a survey, the net effect on the analysis may be an underestimate of the perspectives of small CWS that are already engaged in partnerships.

Survey deployment followed the “Tailored Design Method” (Dillman et al. 2014) for mixed-mode surveys. All small CWS whose points of contact had an email were sent an electronic survey using the Qualtrics software program during the fall of 2023. Every two weeks, reminders were sent by email to non-respondents and those that started but had not completed the survey. After three reminder emails, and a total of six weeks, the number of respondents from each state was tallied. In states where less than 10% of small CWS responded to the electronic survey, a print survey was mailed to a subset of non-respondents selected using random sampling. In addition to the full set of survey materials (cover letter, print survey instrument, business return envelope), both the survey packet and the reminder post-cards also included a QR code, which recipients could scan to respond to the survey electronically.

3.3.Data Validation and Quality Assurance

Data collected across the multiple modes (electronic Qualtrics, print, and QR versions of the survey) was quality checked and combined. Print survey data was scanned using Teleform software and manually verified. Responses submitted with no questions answered were deleted from the dataset. In the few instances in which there appeared to be more than one response from the same small CWS (e.g., a PWSID number was listed more than once in the dataset), the responses were double checked by multiple researchers. Often this turned out to be a respondent who started an electronic survey and did not finish it, then opened it again to finalize it. In these instances, the most complete survey response (determined by the number of questions answered) was used and the other response deleted. If two responses from the same PWSID included identical amounts of data, a single response was randomly selected to include in the dataset.

4. Survey Respondent Perspectives on Partnerships

Respondents encompass 13% of all small CWS in the United States. With respect to CWS ownership structure and water source, characteristics of respondents closely parallel the characteristics of the full set of small CWS across the United States (Table 2).

Ownership structure

The largest group (53%) of respondents represent small CWS that are owned by local governmental entities, including municipalities, parishes, counties, and special districts. Privately owned (23%) and community owned (22%) systems constitute smaller shares of the respondents. The “other” category (3%) includes respondents from state, federal, or tribal systems, or respondents for whom the ownership category could not be determined with confidence due to ambiguity in how they described themselves.

Water source

The majority of respondents rely on groundwater (76.3%), with some relying on purchased water (17%) and a small number using surface water (6.8%).

Table 2: Survey Respondents, Compared to All Small CWS in the United States

Attribute	Survey Population		All CWS in U.S.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Number of Systems	5660	n/a	43740	13%
System Ownership				
Local Government	3004	53%	20147	46%
Private	1265	23%	21779	50%
Community*	1246	22%		
Other	145	3%	1814	4%
Water Source				
Ground Water	4318	76%	32743	76%
Surface Water	386	7%	2501	6%
Purchased Water	955	17%	8028	18%

* SDWIS includes community owned CWS (cooperatives, homeowner associations) within the category of private ownership.

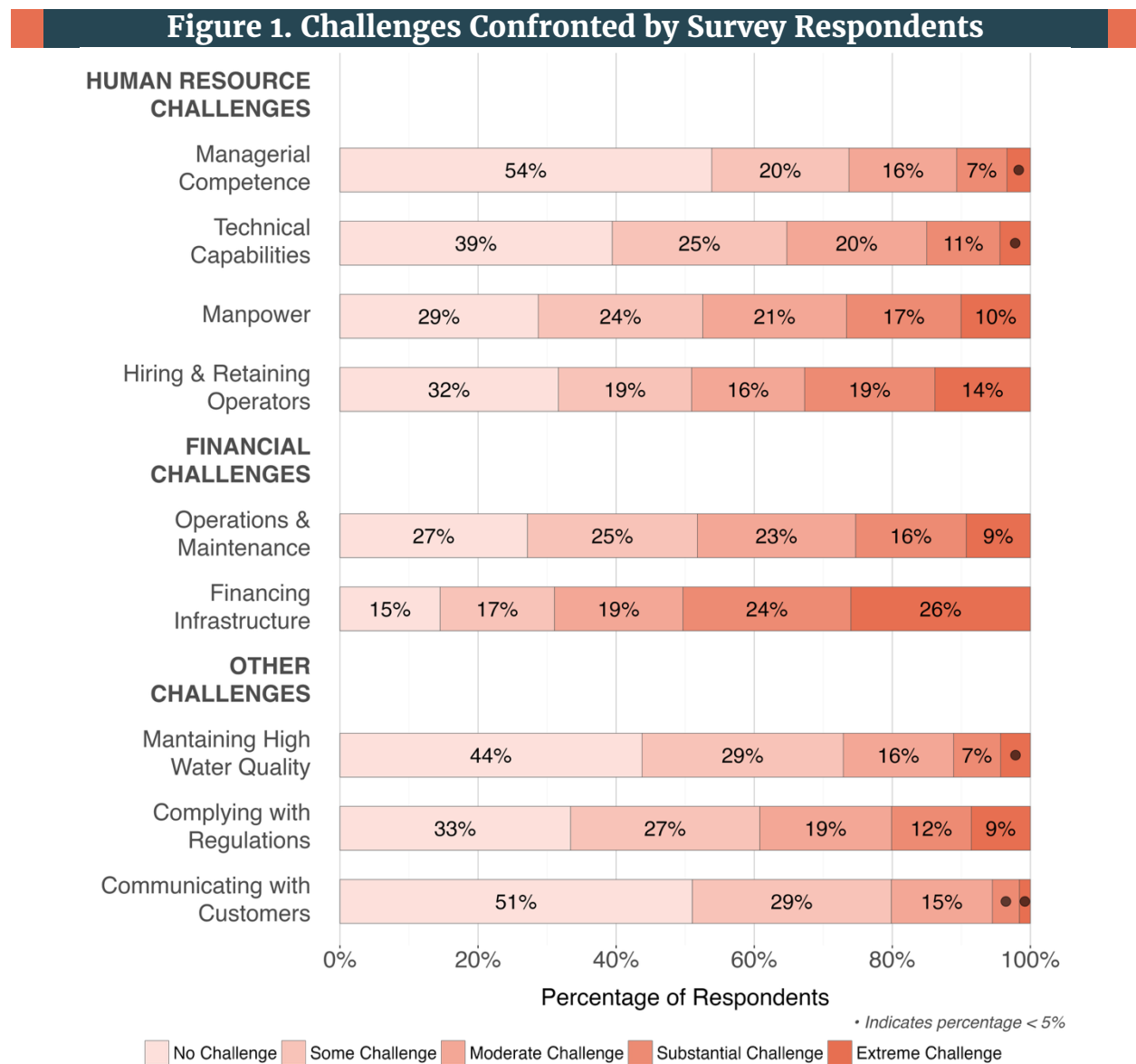
4.1.Common Challenges Experienced by Small CWS

Small CWS may face a variety of challenges in three overarching categories:

- **Human resources:** Challenges include gaps in managerial capacity (planning, organizational structures, administrative controls), a lack of technical expertise, insufficient staffing levels, and persistent difficulties in hiring and retaining certified operators. These limitations are particularly acute in systems reliant on volunteer or part-time personnel.
- **Financial:** Challenges include inability to acquire or leverage funds to cover the ongoing costs of system operations and maintenance as well as the substantial capital costs associated with infrastructure repair, upgrades, and long-term asset management.
- **Operational and regulatory:** Challenges include maintaining high-quality water, achieving and sustaining compliance with an expanding regulatory environment, and effectively communicating with customers regarding system performance and service changes.

The specific problems experienced by a small CWS will shape whether, and what type of, partnerships can help. While partnerships can be a useful solution for many issues, some problems cannot be solved through partnerships. For example, partnering with a nearby entity may be an effective way to resolve local staffing gaps, but a local partnership cannot

overcome a regional labor shortage. Figure 1 depicts the degree to which respondents experience each type of challenge.



Financing upgrades or replacing infrastructure is the biggest challenge experienced by respondents, with only 15% indicating it is not a challenge and 26% indicating it is an extreme challenge. While financing operations and maintenance is also reported as a substantial or extreme challenge by many (25%) respondents, a larger number of respondents rated hiring and retaining operators (33%), manpower (27%), and complying with regulations (31%) as substantial or extreme challenges. Managerial competence, maintaining high water quality, and communicating with customers are less of a challenge, with 44% or more of respondents indicating those are not a challenge and less than 12% of respondents citing those as substantial or moderate challenges.

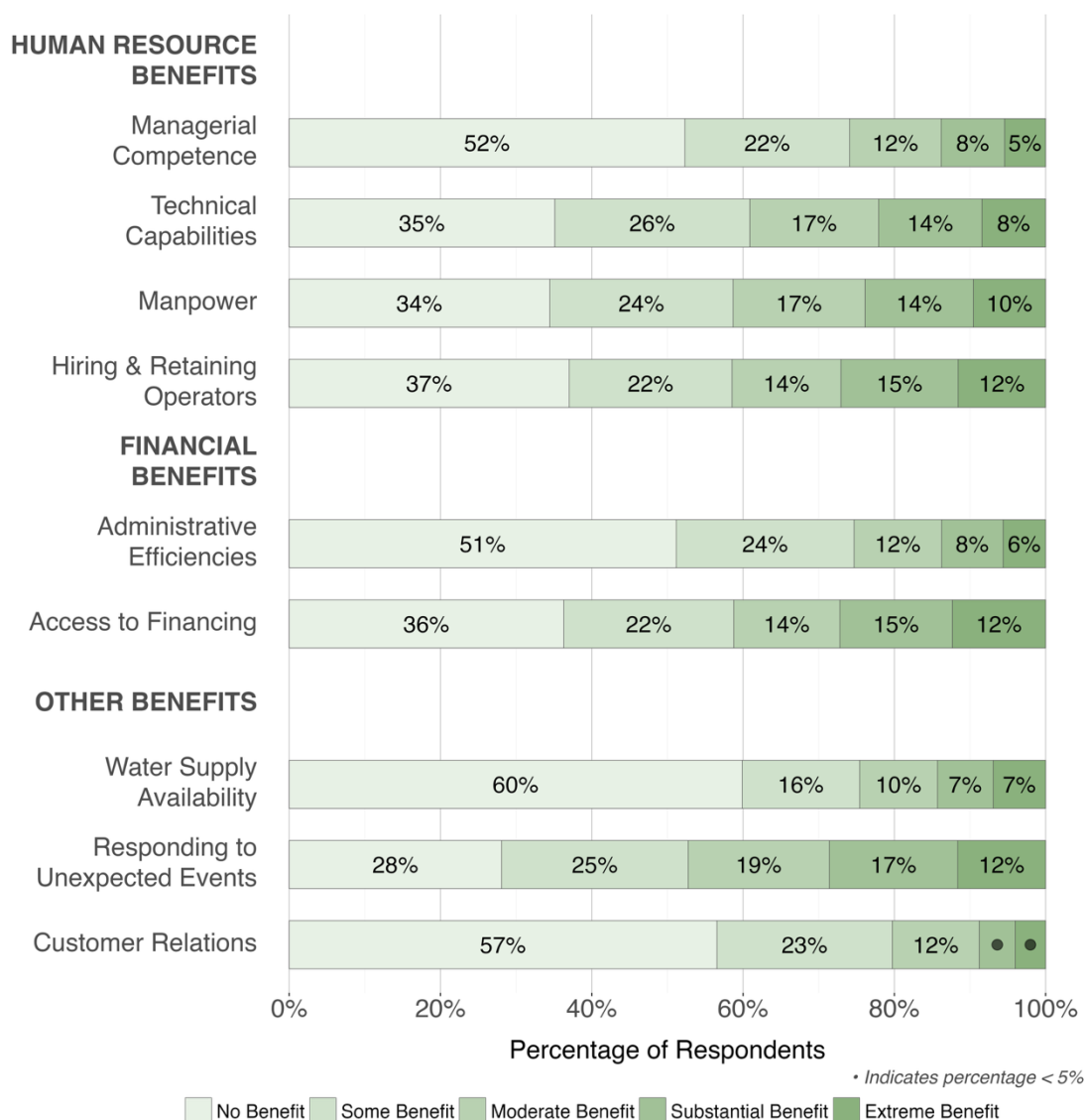
4.2. Potential Benefits of Partnerships to Small CWS

Partnerships may provide benefits to or help small CWS address a range of operational, financial, and service-delivery challenges. The specific types of benefits small CWS expect to gain from partnerships will influence their interest in partnerships as a potential strategy. While partnerships have the potential to offer many benefits, whether those benefits come to fruition, and to what degree, will depend on a variety of factors, including the specific context of the small CWS, its partnership opportunities, and the forms partnerships might take. Figure 2 depicts respondent perspectives on the degree to which they would experience benefits associated with partnership, while Figure 3 depicts respondent perspectives on the magnitude of benefit from varying types of partnerships.

Respondent perspectives on the potential benefits from partnerships are mixed. For each type of potential gain, more than a quarter, and sometimes more than half, of respondents indicated they did not expect their system would benefit, while at most a quarter of respondents said they would derive substantial or extreme benefits. Respondents expect the greatest gains in responding to unexpected events, with 29% of respondents indicating they expected substantial or extreme benefits in this area and only 28% of respondents indicating partnerships would provide no benefits. Respondents expect the least gains in customer relations, with only 8% indicating they expect substantial or extreme benefits in this area, while 57% of respondents indicated partnerships would provide no benefits. Notably, respondents view partnerships as likely to provide greater gains in access to financing (27% of respondents reported substantial to extreme benefits) than from administrative efficiencies (14% of respondents reported substantial to extreme benefits), even though increased economies of scale and reduced duplicative activities is an oft-touted benefit of partnerships.

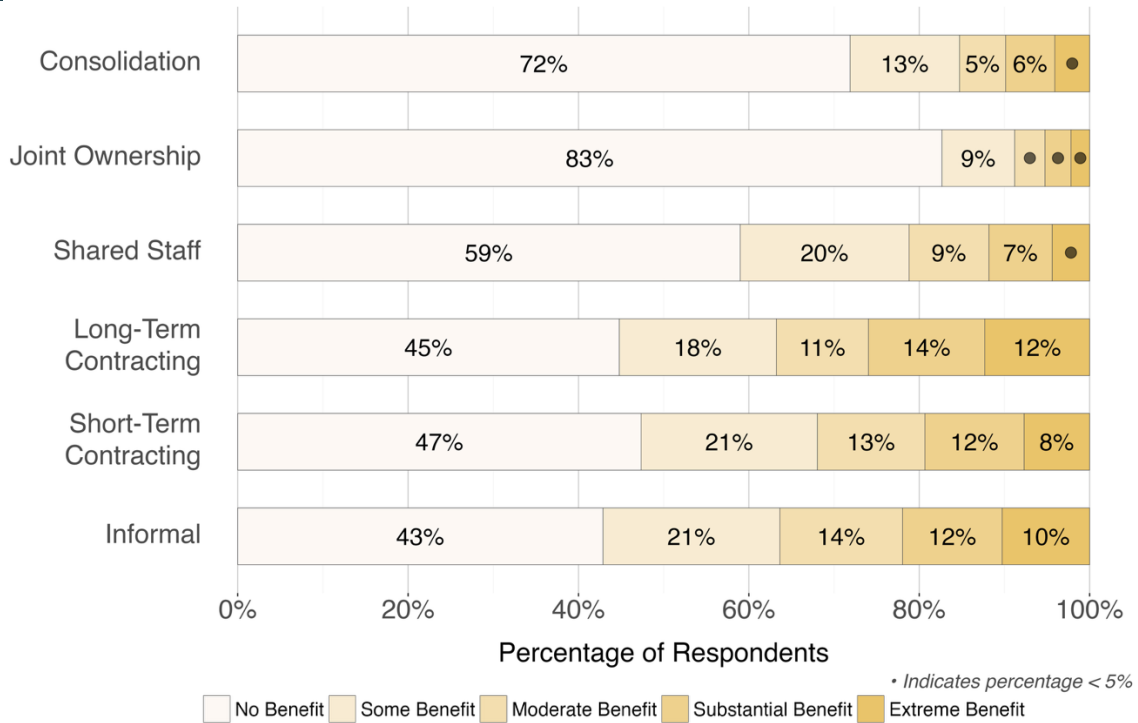
Regarding whether partnerships might address the challenges faced by small CWS, data suggest there is potentially a good fit between some, but not all, of the needs of small CWS and the expected benefits of partnerships. As noted in section 4.1, financing is a challenge for many small CWS. While more respondents reported experiencing substantial to extreme challenges with financing than indicated they thought partnerships would provide substantial to extreme benefits in accessing financing, the overlap between opportunity and need suggests partnerships may be able to help address this challenge. Human resources may be another area where partnerships can support small CWS needs. The spread of respondents reporting no to extreme human-resource benefit from partnerships closely aligns with the spread of respondents reporting no to extreme challenge across each human-resource need (managerial competence, technical capabilities, manpower, and hiring and retaining of operators).

Figure 2. Benefits Small CWS Might Gain from Partnerships



Not only do respondents have varying views about the types of benefits that might be gained from partnerships, they also hold diverse views regarding which types of partnerships are most beneficial (Figure 3). Consolidation and joint ownership are viewed least favorably, with 72% and 83% of respondents, respectively, indicating those types of partnerships would yield no benefits for their small CWS. In contrast, more respondents indicated that informal partnerships and contracting services (long- and short-term) would provide substantial or extreme benefits. While the survey did not elicit reasons for these perspectives, one explanation could be that, because consolidation and joint ownership entail greater transfer of control, respondents may perceive greater drawbacks or barriers to those types of partnerships than to contracting and informal partnerships.

Figure 3. Benefit from Each Type of Partnership

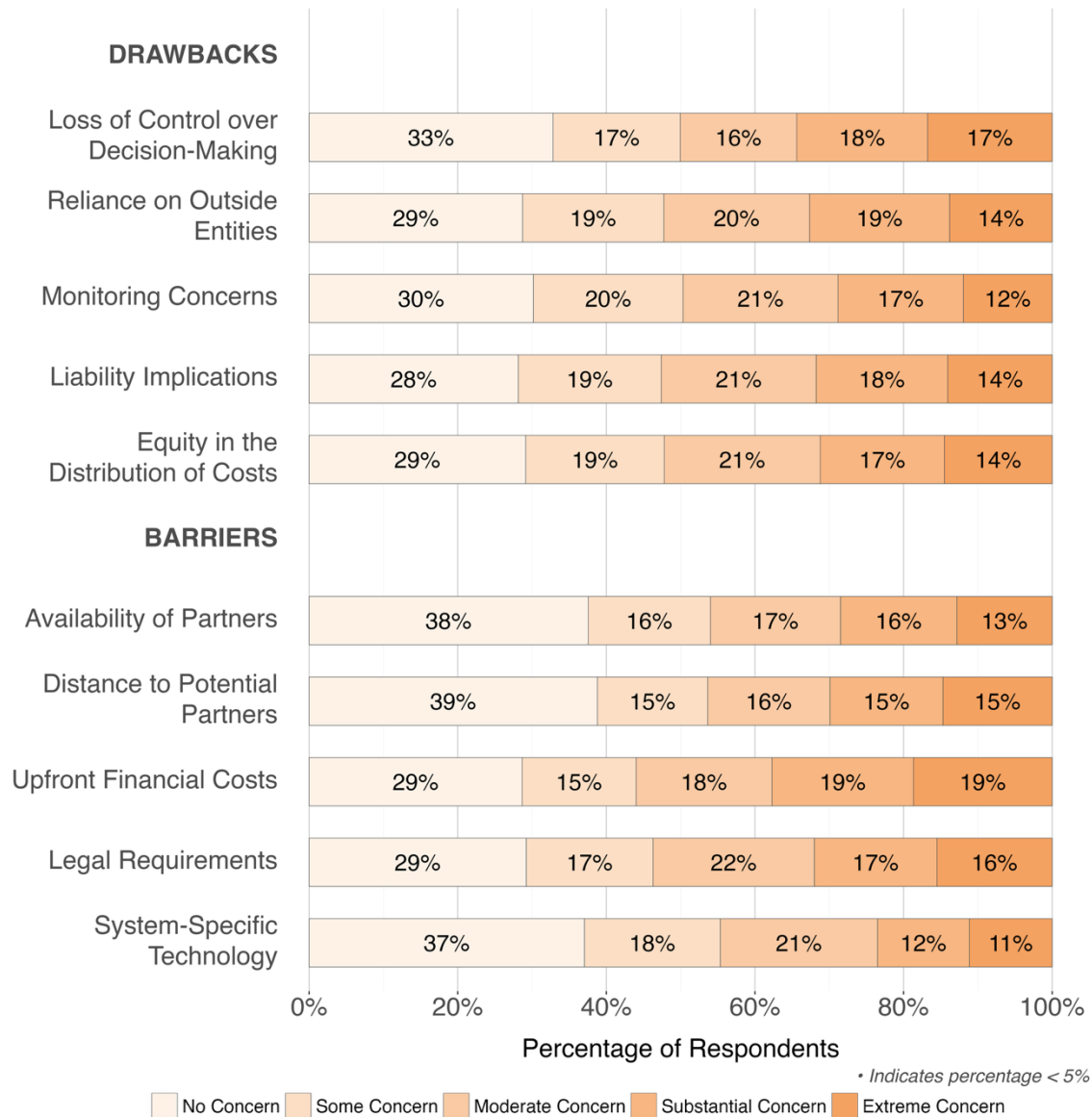


4.3. Drawbacks of and Barriers to Partnerships by Small CWS

While partnerships have the potential to offer benefits, as noted in section 4.2, they also have potential drawbacks. Depending on how they are structured, partnerships may affect the autonomy of a small CWS, including some loss of control over decision making. Partnerships may also introduce new risks associated with relying on outside entities (potentially requiring monitoring to ensure partners follow through on their responsibilities) and create the potential for additional liabilities and inequitable distribution of costs among partners. Further, a variety of institutional, financial, and other factors unique to the specific context of a particular CWS may also hinder partnership formation. Small CWS may have difficulty finding appropriate partners nearby. Partnership formation may necessitate upfront costs or be inhibited by legal and institutional requirements. Lastly, small CWS may have difficulty partnering due to asset-specificity, when the specific technologies and operational practices of the utility do not work synergistically with those used by potential partners.

The extent to which a small CWS is concerned about added risks and has experienced barriers will influence their openness to partnership formation. Figure 4 depicts the extent of respondent concerns about these issues.

Figure 4. Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers



As with their perspectives on the potential benefits of partnerships, respondents vary in the extent to which they have concerns about partnerships. Responses about each of the potential drawbacks to partnerships (loss of control over decision-making, dependence on reliance on outside entities, their ability to monitor and ensure partner compliance, and equity in the distribution of costs) are relatively evenly distributed between no concern and extreme concern, with a slightly larger percentage of respondents reporting no concern. Responses about each of the potential barriers to partnerships (availability of partners, distance to potential partners, upfront financial costs, legal requirements, and system-specific technology) are also widely distributed, though a slightly higher percentage of respondents report no concerns about barriers than about drawbacks.

Respondents emphasized several concerns about partnerships in their open-ended comments. Multiple respondents expressed concerns that partnerships would lead to increased water rates. Respondents who expressed this concern seemed to be referring to consolidation or mergers, as they anticipated the capital costs associated with interconnection or infrastructure changes would be recovered solely from their small customer base. Concerns about rate increases were also attributed to expectations that partnerships would change operating costs, lead to a change in rate structures, or result in differential treatment of their customers relative to the customers of a prospective partnering utility.

Respondents expressed a lack of trust in potential partners, reiterating concerns that partnerships would lead to a loss of control over decisions and that partnering entities would not adequately account for their community's needs. Some respondents expressed concerns that larger municipalities or state actors would exploit their smaller, less "sophisticated" rural communities, while others expressed a more general expectation that a larger utility would fail to prioritize the specific interests of their customers following consolidation.

A subset of respondents expressed concerns more about the prospects of partnering than about potential impacts to their own systems. These respondents thought their small CWS would be perceived as a burden and doubted larger utilities would have sufficient incentive to enter into a partnership arrangement with them.

Beyond commonly identified barriers, such as upfront costs and distance to suitable partners, respondents also highlighted their limited institutional capacity to navigate the partnership-formation process. These respondents mentioned a reliance on volunteer or part-time staff who do not have the time or capacity to work through the cumbersome institutional and administrative processes of partnership formation. Several also noted that the larger utilities they had approached were unwilling to invest in the effort required to formalize such arrangements.

Lack of support from local governing bodies or community members was also identified as a barrier, with respondents noting difficulties securing approval from town boards or homeowners in their community for arrangements that would be perceived as ceding local control or imposing additional financial obligations.

4.4. Small CWS Experience with Partnerships

Prior experience can influence perspectives on the benefits of, and drawbacks and barriers to, partnerships. As shown in Table 3, 58% of respondents had experience with one or more forms of partnership. Few reported having been involved in a partnership that ended

unsuccessfully. Most commonly, respondents reported having participated in contracting (long- or short-term), followed by informal partnerships. Respondents that had experience with contracting most frequently contracted engineering services (54%), water quality testing (53%), and certified operators (42%). Respondents less frequently engaged contractors for purchasing water (18%) and managerial or administrative services (14%).

Table 3: Small CWS Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership	No Experience	Partnership Ongoing	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully
Consolidation	94 %	5 %	1 %	0 %
Joint Ownership	96 %	4 %	0 %	0 %
Shared Staff	92 %	7 %	1 %	0 %
Long-Term Contracting	65 %	33 %	1 %	1 %
Short-Term Contracting	70 %	23 %	5 %	1 %
Informal	71 %	27 %	2 %	0 %

5. State Policies Designed to Encourage Partnership Formation

Across the United States, state governments have implemented a number of policies to help encourage small CWS to form partnerships. Although the specific details of each policy are unique to each state, in many instances, the policies have similar aims and use similar intervention mechanisms. Many policies are designed to address common concerns among state agencies related to a) the proliferation of new small CWS and b) a subset of small CWS that continually fail to comply with Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. Many states promote and encourage partnership formation using the standard toolkits available to policymakers, including c) facilitating agreement through the provision of legal and administrative frameworks, d) raising awareness about partnerships, e) directly identifying and supporting partnership opportunities, and f) subsidizing partnership formation. Table 4 provides a list and describes these aims and intervention mechanisms.

Table 4: Common Aims and Intervention Mechanisms of Policies Used by States to Encourage Formation of Partnerships by Small CWS

Policy Aim	Intervention Mechanism	Description
Limit New Systems	Capacity Requirements for New Systems	Operating permits will not be issued for new CWS unless applicants demonstrate they have the necessary technical, managerial, and financial capacity and have considered alternative options that include partnerships.
	Prioritize Service by Existing Systems	Conditions (details vary by state) are placed on new systems that require connections to neighboring public CWS, transfer of ownership if connections become feasible, or satellite management.
	Require Assessment of Potential Interconnection	Operating permits will not be issued for new CWS unless interconnection is either not feasible or not in the customer's best interest or unless alternatives to building a new system have been evaluated.
Address Noncompliance through Partnerships	State Ordered Consolidation	State primacy agencies have the authority to require non-compliant CWS to consolidate or interconnect, including as part of appointing receivership.
	Enforcement Programs Include Partnerships	State primacy agencies can lower or waive penalties for noncompliance if the noncompliant system agrees to interconnect or consolidate.
Facilitate Partnership Agreements	Enable Cooperative Agreements or Mergers	State laws provide a legal structure for CWS to merge or form cooperative agreements.
	Allow Use of Contract or Shared Operators	State laws and regulations allow CWS to use contract or shared operators.
	Guidelines for Contract or Shared Operators	State agencies provide guidance documents for contract and shared operators. Documents include guidelines for duties and responsibilities and/or boilerplate contracts.
	State Supported Mutual Aid Agreements	State agencies directly support programs that facilitate mutual aid between CWS, including but not limited to the WARN Network.
Raise Awareness of Partnerships	Outreach Promoting Partnerships	State agencies encourage partnerships as part their regular capacity building activities, including when working with individual systems or through workshops and other trainings.

	Technical, Managerial, and Financial (TMF) Assessments Include Partnership Consideration	State agencies use TMF assessments to help CWS identify their capacity gaps and to inform CWS about the potential benefits of partnerships in filling those gaps.
	Technical, Managerial, and Financial Assessments Required for Funding Eligibility	CWS applying for state grant funding must complete a TMF assessment. CWS determined to lack capacity are ineligible for funding and counseled to consolidate or interconnect with other systems.
Identify Opportunities and Coordinate Efforts	State Assists Partnership Formation	State agencies identify specific opportunities and provide funding for CWS to undertake partnerships.
	State Leads Regional Planning	State agencies develop regional plans that include analysis of interconnection of systems and water supply planning. These plans are used to coordinate infrastructure projects and funding.
	State Leads Regional Coordination	State agencies facilitate meetings during which CWS come together to coordinate their services and water supplies.
	State Maintains List of Contract Operators	State agencies provide a working list of contract operators available for hire
Subsidize Costs of Partnerships	DWSRF Prioritizes Partnerships	When evaluating Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) applications, state agencies award priority points to proposals that include interconnection, consolidation, or regionalization.
	Funding for Partnership Assessments	State agencies provide funding for systems to undertake assessments of potential partnerships including interconnection, consolidation, and engineering reports for those.
	In-Kind Support for Partnership Assessments	State agencies or third-party contractors prepare documents on behalf of systems to support partnership formation.
	Funding for Partnership Implementation	State legislatures or agencies offer grant or loan programs that support interconnections or consolidation.

The type and number of policies states have adopted to foster partnerships by small CWS varies. Some have adopted a single policy, while others have adopted up to seven policies.

Table 5 lists the states that have adopted each of the commonly used types of policies. Policies designed to subsidize the costs of partnership are most prevalent, with 34 states providing priority points to applicants for Drinking Water State Revolving Funds seeking to form partnerships. Some of those states, as well as other states, also provide other incentive programs for partnership formation. Policies designed to facilitate partnership agreements are also widespread. In contrast, fewer states have adopted policies that support efforts by small CWS to identify partnership opportunities and coordinate partnership formation, or that raise awareness of partnerships. Policies designed to limit new systems or address noncompliance through partnerships are the least commonly adopted.

State policies designed to foster partnership formation do not always apply uniformly to every CWS in the state. Some policies focus on a subset of small CWS. For example, to limit new systems, some policies only apply to entities that intend to build and operate a new CWS and the existing CWS in that vicinity. Policies designed to address noncompliance are only applicable to CWS that have repeatedly failed to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act or to neighboring CWS that state agencies hope will partner with those failing systems.

Some policies are designed to foster particular types of partnerships, such as those focused on contract and shared operators (contracts/shared staff) or mutual aid agreements (informal partnerships). As a result, when rating the effect of each policy in their state, respondents often noted that specific policies were not applicable to their CWS. Additionally, small CWS are not always aware of policies in their state that support partnership formation. This lack of awareness among CWS may result from a lack of attention to state policies, limited capacity of staff to learn about policies, poor advertising or awareness building by state agencies, and other factors.

Table 5 lists the percent of respondents who noted that a policy adopted in their state does not apply to their CWS and the percent of respondents indicating they are unaware of a policy that has been adopted in their state.

Table 5: States Implementing and Survey Respondent Awareness and Applicability of Policies Used by States to Encourage Partnership Formation

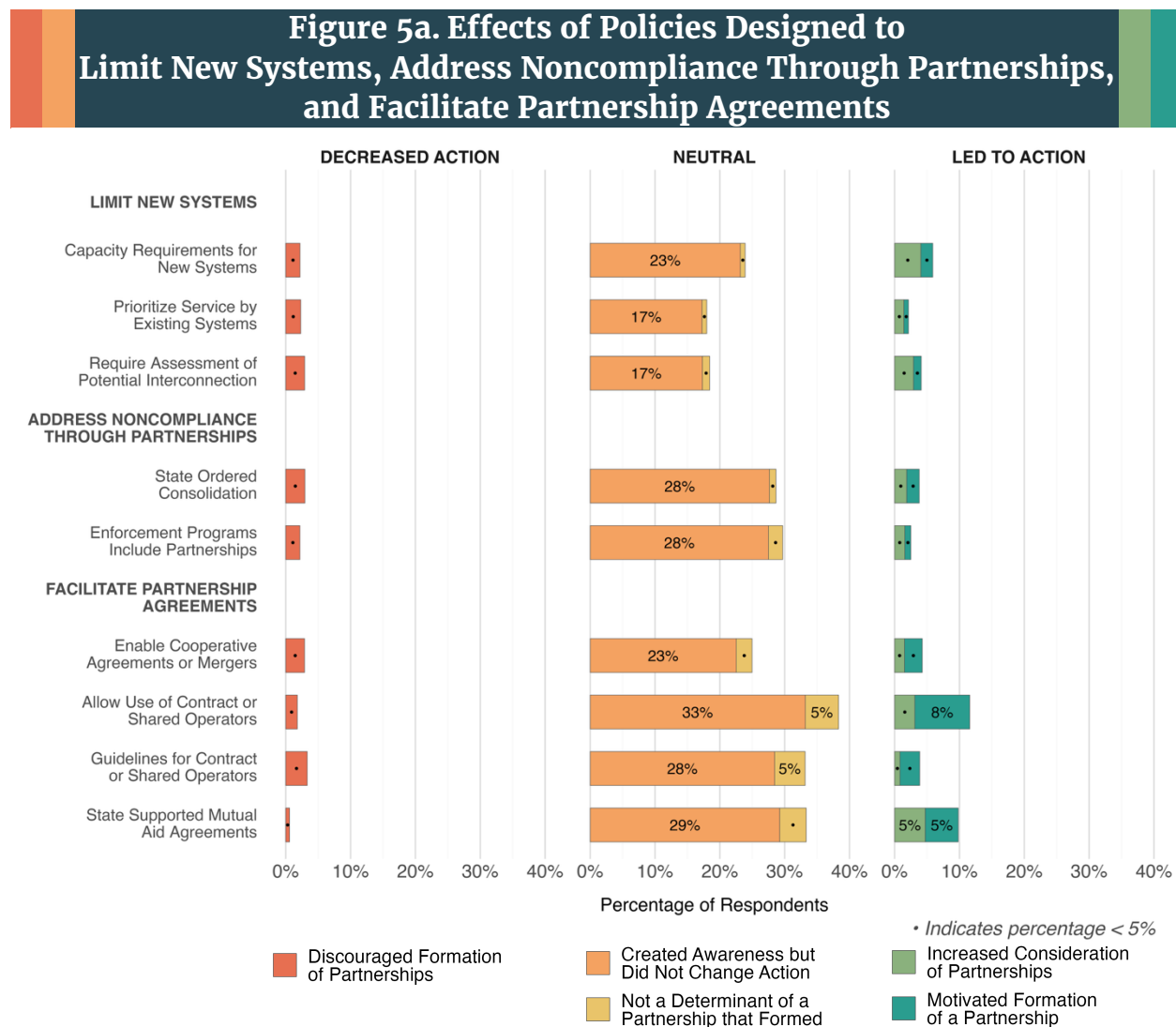
Policy Aim	Intervention Mechanism	States Implementing	% Survey Respondents Policy Does Not Apply To Them	% Survey Respondents Unaware of Policy
Limit New Systems	Capacity Requirements for New systems	AL, KY, NE, UT, WA	29%	39%
	Prioritize Service by Existing Systems	MI, MO, MT, NM, TX, UT, WA	32%	45%
	Require Assessment of Potential Interconnection	AK, AR, CA, CT, FL, GA, ID, IN, NA, ND, NM, SD, TN, WY	31%	43%
Address Noncompliance Through Partnership	State Ordered Consolidation	AK, AZ, CA, CT, KY, LA, MD, MO, MS, NH, NJ, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA	28%	37%
	Enforcement Programs Include Partnerships	GA, KY, MO, MS	24%	42%
Facilitate Partnership Agreements	Enable Cooperative Agreements or Mergers	KS, OR, RI	16%	52%
	Enable Contract or Shared Operators	AK, AZ, FL, IA, ID, NA, NJ, SD, TN	17%	32%
	Guidelines for Contract or Shared Operators	IL, MA, ME, MN, UT	15%	45%
	State Supported Mutual Aid Agreements	CA, CO, FL, HI, IA, ID, LA, MA, MD, ME, MN, NA, NC, NH, OH, OR, PA, SD, TX, WV	10%	46%
Raise Awareness of Partnerships	Outreach Promoting Partnerships	CO, MI, MO, NC, NM, OR, RI, TX	16%	53%

	TMF Assessments Include Partnership Consideration	AL, IL, MA, SD	19%	44%
	TMF Assessments Required for Funding Eligibility	IN, MD, NV, NY, UT, VA	19%	48%
Identify Opportunities and Coordinate Efforts	State Assists Partnership Formation	NY, OK	20%	57%
	State Leads Regional Planning	CT, DE, MT, ND, OK	15%	58%
	State Leads Regional Coordination	KY, MI, NV, TN, WI	17%	46%
	State Maintains List of Contract Operators	ID, MO, OH, UT, WI	9%	38%
Subsidize Cost of Partnerships	DWSRF Prioritizes Partnerships	AK, AL, AR, AZ, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NA, ND, NH, NJ, NM, OH, OK, RI, SC, SD, TX, VT, WI	18%	52%
	Funding for Partnership Assessments	ME, MO, NC, NH, SD, UT, VT	20%	45%
	In-Kind Support for Partnership Assessments	AZ, ME, PA, SC, TX	12%	66%
	Funding for Partnership Implementation	CA, FL, GA, IA, KS, LA, ME, NA, NC, NH, NY, OK, OR, PA, SC, VA, WA, WI, WV, WY	19%	54%

5.1. Effects of State Policies on Small CWS Consideration of Partnerships

Respondents shared a range of views on the impact of state policies on partnership formation, with some reporting policies decreased their interest in partnership formation, and others reporting policies increased their interest in partnership formation. Figure 5a

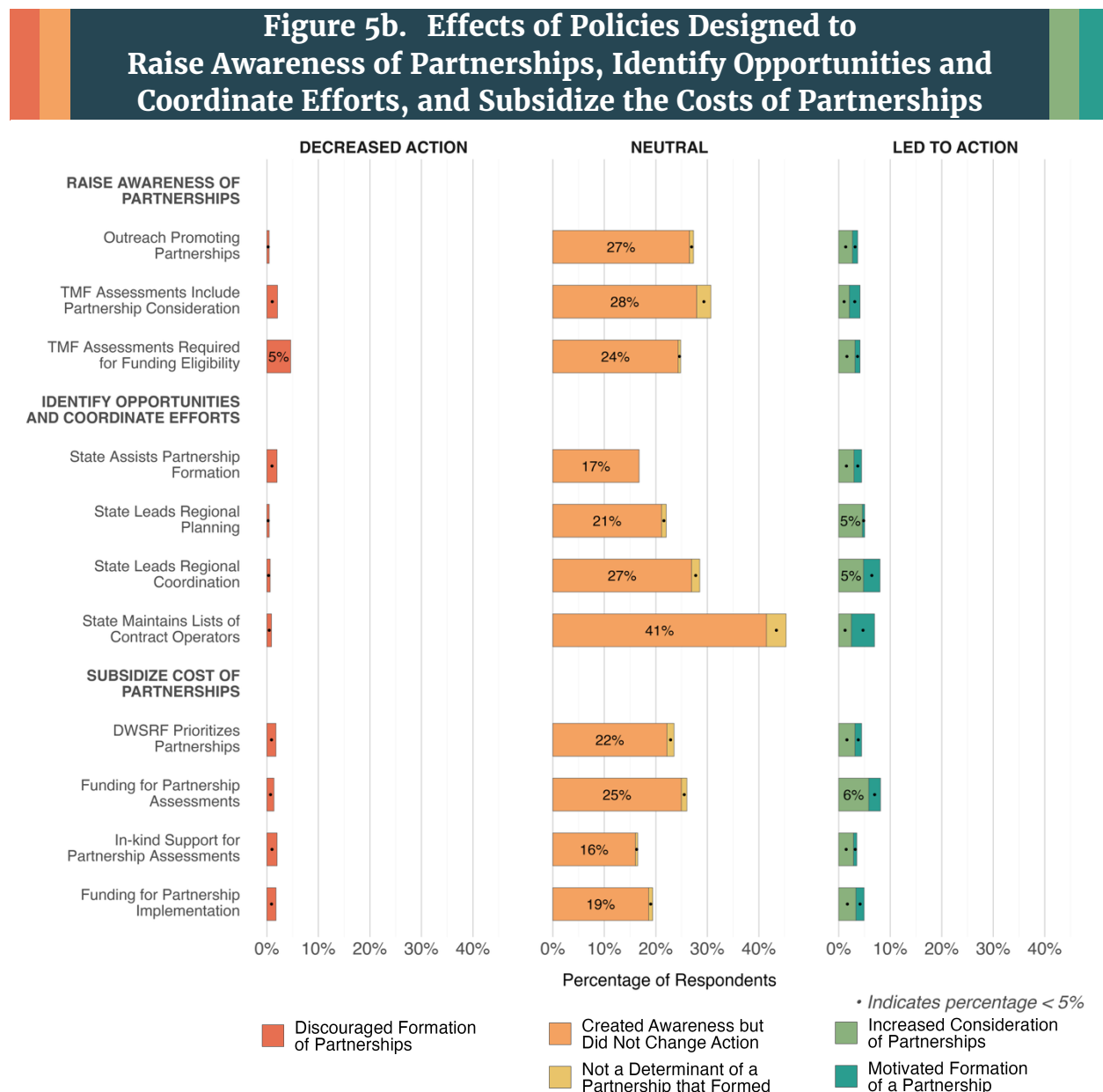
depicts the effects of the first three sets of policy aims as delineated in Tables 4 and 5, while Figure 5b depicts the effects of the last four sets of policy aims.²



Notably, a small percentage of respondents ($\leq 5\%$) reported that each policy intervention mechanism decreased action by discouraging them from forming partnerships. A larger portion of respondents (ranging between 18% and 43%) reported the policies had a neutral effect: either creating awareness without changing the respondent's actions or, in instances when the respondent did form a partnership, not factoring into the decision to do so. Lastly, a set of respondents (generally $< 10\%$) indicated state policies had led to action, either increasing their consideration of partnerships or motivating them to form a

² Surveys asked respondents only about existing policies in their state and the number of survey respondents vary by state. Consequently, response rates vary across each row in Figures 5a and 5b.

partnership. In addition, as noted in Table 5, many respondents indicated they were unaware of the policy or that the policy was not applicable to them.



In terms of policies that fostered partnership formation, the greatest number of respondents indicated policies designed to facilitate partnership agreements led them to take action. Of respondents that took action, most were motivated by interventions that allow use of remote or shared operators and state-supported mutual aid agreements. At the same time, the largest percentage of respondents also said these policies had a neutral effect. This finding likely reflects a greater interest among small CWS in contracting of

operators and mutual aid than in other types of partnerships — which is supported by the fact that the greatest number of respondents reported having experience with contracting (including of certified operators) and informal partnerships. A large number of respondents may have reported that these policy interventions had a neutral effect because many respondents are already engaged in, or would have engaged in, contracting operators and mutual aid partnerships irrespective of the policy.

Respondents indicated policies designed to subsidize the cost of partnerships and policies that identify opportunities and coordinate efforts were the next most likely to lead to action, with 4-8% of respondents indicating each of these interventions led them to action. Since the upfront costs of partnerships was listed by the greatest number of respondents as a substantial or extreme barrier to partnership formation, it stands to reason that subsidizing partnership formation would help small CWS overcome this barrier. Yet the fact that funding to assess partnership formation led a greater number of respondents (8%) to action — relative to dedicated financial support (5%) or in-kind support (3%) for partnership implementation — suggests the costs associated with studying and designing potential partnerships may be a key constraint.

Policies that identify opportunities and coordinate efforts appear to have approximately the same effect as policies that subsidize partnership costs. While these types of policies do not directly map to the drawbacks or barriers to partnerships listed in the survey, they reduce the transaction costs associated with searching for potential partners and partnership opportunities and build awareness of potential benefits. Given that 4% and 7% of respondents, respectively, indicated these interventions led them to action, at least a small percentage of small CWS would likely find such assistance useful.

Policies designed to raise awareness of partnerships led a smaller number of respondents (3-5%) to action. This finding may mean that knowledge of partnerships is less of a constraint than the costs associated with searching for and implementing partnerships.

Notably, policies designed to limit new systems led approximately the same number of respondents to take action towards partnership formation as policies designed to raise awareness. Given that policies designed to limit new systems only affect a subset of small CWS, this finding indicates those policies have a greater effect on partnership formation. However, data about where expansion of drinking water services is occurring is needed to determine the true percentage of respondents that took action in response to these policies.

The fewest respondents indicated policies designed to address noncompliance through partnerships led them to action. However, those policies only apply to a subset of CWS. Only about 7% of all CWS in the United States fail to meet health related Safe Drinking Water Act standards each year (EPA 2025c) and of those, only a small percentage are

repeatedly in noncompliance. The fact that these policies led 3-4 % of respondents to take action towards partnership formation suggests that they may be quite effective. Further data on which specific systems these policies apply to, and their potential partners, is needed to more accurately assess the effectiveness of these policies.

While state policies led a portion of respondents to action on partnerships, they also discouraged a small percentage of respondents from considering partnerships. Policies that require TMF assessments as eligibility requirement for state funding discouraged the greatest number of participants (5%) from considering partnerships, followed by guidelines for contract or shared operators, required assessment of potential interconnection, and state ordered consolidation (4% each). The reasons for these inverse effects are unknown. It may be that additional information, guidelines, or requirements make small CWS aware of the drawbacks or barriers to partnerships. Or it may be these policies help small CWS to identify strategies beyond partnerships for addressing their needs. Further research is needed to determine the causes of these undesigned effects and whether they lead small CWS to effective management decisions, irrespective of whether those include partnerships.

5.2. Likely Effects of Policy Interventions on Partnership Formation

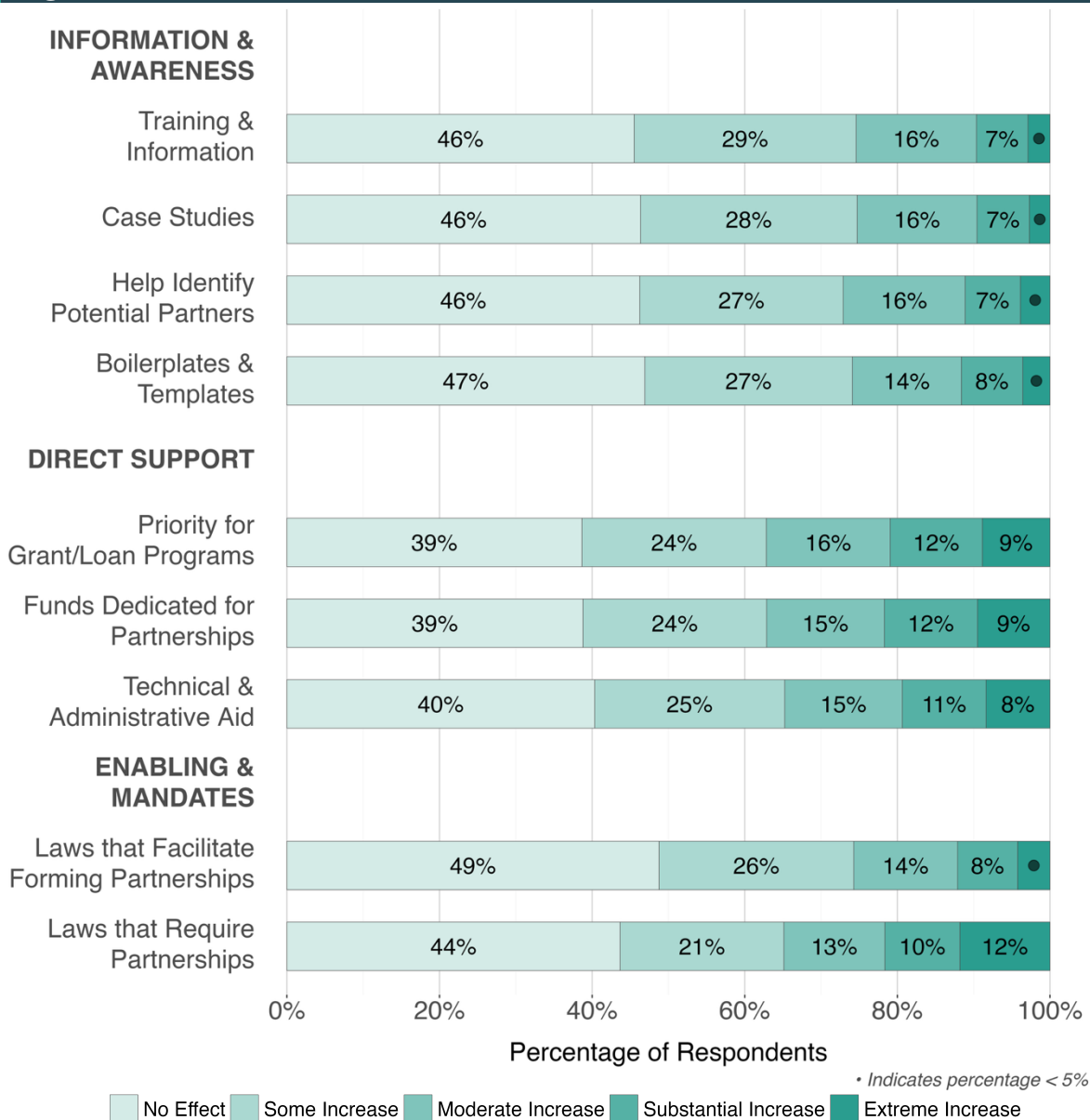
Although many states have adopted policies designed to foster partnership formation, as indicated by survey respondents, these policies frequently have not led small CWS to take action towards partnerships. While the reasons for inaction may be varied, it raises the question of whether additional policy interventions would increase the likelihood that small CWS seek out partnerships. Such interventions could focus on building awareness of partnerships and disseminating information to help guide partnership formation; providing resources that directly support partnership formation; or enabling or requiring partnership formation through legal means.

Respondents hold mixed views regarding the effects of additional policy interventions (Figure 6). More than 39% of respondents said additional interventions, of any form, would not affect their consideration of partnerships. The fewest number of respondents, just under 10%, indicated that policies designed to provide information and awareness, or laws facilitating partnership formation, would be substantially or extremely likely to increase their consideration of partnerships. Whereas approximately 20% of respondents indicated direct support and laws requiring partnership formation would be substantially or extremely likely to increase their consideration of partnerships.

Notably, the proportion of respondents selecting each category of effect (from none to extreme) is approximately constant across all of the potential interventions included in the survey. One possible explanation for this pattern is that these numbers may reflect the relative interest of respondents in partnerships — meaning the approximately 40% of

respondents who said additional interventions would have no effect may be those who have no interest in forming partnerships, while the 10-20% of respondents who said additional interventions would substantially or extremely increase their consideration of partnerships may have a substantive interest in partnerships.

Figure 6. Effects of Additional Interventions on Partnership Formation



In open-ended comments, some respondents indicated that financial support would make them more likely to consider partnerships. These respondents noted that costs make partnerships impractical, and that grants or other mechanisms to reduce or eliminate their costs would be useful. Comments about financial support implied the respondents were thinking about the costs associated with consolidation or mergers; open-ended comments

did not discuss the impact of additional financial support in relation to informal or contract partnerships.

Some respondents commented that easily accessible information would be helpful in considering partnerships, explaining that it was not feasible for them to invest significant effort, time, or money into learning about partnerships on their own. Within this group, several specifically mentioned wanting information on how partnerships would financially benefit them.

A handful of respondents also noted the complexity of partnership formation and said assistance working through legal and administrative requirements, including a more streamlined process for partnership formation, would be useful.

6. Discussion

This survey reveals substantial heterogeneity among small CWS both in the challenges they grapple with and in their expectations of the benefits that might result from partnerships. There are small CWS who report few operational challenges and small CWS that report confronting one or more extreme challenges. Similarly, there are small CWS who do not anticipate benefits of any type from partnerships, while others report partnerships would greatly benefit their system. Although a majority of respondents indicated that partnerships would yield at least some benefit, only approximately one-fifth to one-quarter anticipated benefits of a substantial or extreme magnitude from each type of partnership. This pattern is not necessarily evidence against the value of partnerships; rather, it suggests that the utility of partnerships may be concentrated among particular subsets of CWS, and that policies designed to promote partnerships may benefit from more precise targeting toward the systems for which such arrangements are most likely to be effective.

6.1. Only a Portion of Small CWS Expect to Benefit from Partnerships

Survey findings also reveal some divergence between the perspectives of respondents on the potential benefits of partnerships and the benefits commonly referred to in the policy and scholarly discourse on partnerships. Economies of scale and administrative efficiency are benefits commonly ascribed to partnerships, yet more than half of survey respondents did not anticipate that partnerships would produce such benefits for their systems. Respondents were more aligned with the literature on other touted benefits, including improved access to financing and human resource support, and greater capacity to respond to unexpected events or emergencies.

Regarding whether partnerships might help small CWS confront the challenges they face, the distribution of respondents reporting substantial or extreme challenges closely mirrors the distribution of those anticipating substantial or extreme benefits across many

challenge and benefit categories. This alignment is particularly strong for challenges related to human resources, including managerial competence, technical capabilities, staffing levels, and hiring and retaining operators. This finding suggests that partnerships may indeed offer meaningful relief for some of the operational difficulties facing smaller CWS.

Nevertheless, respondents also identified challenges that partnerships cannot fully address. Financing infrastructure was reported as a substantial or extreme challenge by the largest share of respondents, yet only a small portion of respondents viewed partnerships as helpful for financing infrastructure. While the survey did not capture the magnitude of financing needs or assess the degree to which partnerships could realistically meet them, these responses suggest small CWS experience a need for infrastructure financing that extends well beyond what could be expected to be gained through partnerships.

Regulatory compliance was also identified as a substantial or extreme challenge by a notable share of respondents (21%). The survey did not directly elicit respondent views on the extent to which partnerships might help address this challenge. However, open-ended comments included accounts of difficulties with an increasing volume of regulations and unfunded mandates. In these comments, respondents expressed a strong desire for relief from those mandates or for substantially greater support in meeting them. Although the theme of unfunded mandates has been well-documented as a concern of drinking water utilities, it continues to merit attention.

Turning to types of partnerships, a larger number of respondents expected greater benefits from contracting arrangements and informal partnerships, followed by shared staffing agreements. These forms of partnership are characterized by relatively limited transfers of operational responsibility and control and thus are perceived to have fewer drawbacks than contracting or joint ownership. Open-ended comments further reinforced this perspective, with respondents frequently citing concerns about preserving system autonomy and maintaining their ability to meet the specific needs of their customers.

Even while many respondents expressed concerns about, and a perceived lack of benefits from, consolidation, a subset of small CWS have a strong interest in mergers with or interconnections to other systems. Several open-ended comments captured a deep desire for consolidation or interconnection, along with frustration at being unable to bring such arrangements to fruition. This finding is consistent with patterns observed by the authors in other research and technical assistance work with small CWS, particularly those managed by volunteers or those facing leadership succession challenges who have struggled to secure interconnections or other formal arrangements with neighboring utilities.

6.2. Effectiveness of Current State Policies Encouraging Partnerships

The survey findings also indicate that state policies designed to foster partnership formation among CWS have, at most, a moderate reach. This effect can be explained in part by the fact that a substantial proportion of respondents reported few severe operational challenges and did not anticipate substantial or extreme benefits from partnerships, thus are unlikely to form partnerships. Another contributor is the widespread lack of awareness of the policies, with an average of 47% of respondents indicating they were unfamiliar with them. However, the limited degree to which state policies have influenced partnership formation may also reflect the design and applicability of the policies.

Many of the policies have narrow scopes focused on a specific partnership type or aim. These policies may not fit the interests or needs of small CWS, as suggested by the fact that a substantial percentage (on average 19%) of respondents described the policies as not applicable to their system. Some policies pertain exclusively to interconnections, while others are limited to contract-operator arrangements. Certain grants and loan programs exclude private- and community-owned utilities from eligibility. Even ostensibly broader mechanisms may be functionally inaccessible to small CWS. For example, priority points on the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund may lack utility to small CWS, as their project proposals may remain non-competitive relative to those submitted by larger systems due to less favorable benefit-to-cost ratios. Some policies, such as those designed to limit new systems or address noncompliance, need to target a particular subset of CWS. However, expanding the applicability of policies — either by changing existing policies or adding new ones to encompass a broader range of partnerships and CWS — might increase the influence of policies on partnership formation.

Another factor that may be limiting the effectiveness of policies in fostering partnership formation is that the policies largely fail to address the drawbacks and barriers to partnership formation. More than 68% of respondents acknowledged that partnerships entail some drawbacks, though respondents varied in their assessments of the severity of those drawbacks. With the notable exception of the state policy that addresses liability exposure by reducing or waiving fines for noncompliant systems that enter into partnerships, none of the state policies intervene to mitigate the drawbacks associated with partnerships. While some policies do address upfront financial costs and legal constraints to partnership formation, they do not adequately account for other substantive barriers, including the availability of suitable partners, geographic proximity, and the operational or organizational compatibility of potential partner systems.

Beyond scope and design, existing policies may also be insufficient in the magnitude of support they provide. The incentives provided (including subsidies, direct financial assistance, and in-kind support) may not be adequate to offset the costs associated with

partnership formation. Moreover, engaging with state policies requires capacity, and many small CWS operate with volunteer or part-time staff. While partnerships may offer meaningful long-term benefits, as a number of respondents noted in open-ended comments, small CWS may lack the short-term organizational capacity (human resources, time, funding) to participate in state policies, let alone navigate the administrative and logistical demands of partnership formation.

As described in section 5.2, a variety of additional interventions would make some respondents (between 8 and 20% of respondents depending on the intervention) substantially or extremely more likely to consider partnership. At the same time, more than 40% of survey respondents reported additional interventions are unlikely to motivate them to consider partnerships. While it may be that these respondents have no need for partnerships, survey responses also make clear that many small CWS also see partnerships as offering insufficient benefits, ill-suited to address their specific needs or concerns, or as carrying drawbacks that outweigh potential gains.

A distinct, if less prevalent, theme that emerged from open-ended comments was resistance to partnerships because state agencies are encouraging them. These respondents explained that, in their experience, state agencies often fail to account for the unique circumstances of individual small CWS and tend to promote solutions that are ineffective, unreasonable, or otherwise unacceptable to them. These responses merit attention by state policymakers and individuals working within state agencies, as they reflect a mistrust of government. This relational dynamic will need to be addressed for any future policy intervention to be accepted.

Finally, respondents also offered feedback regarding forms of assistance that would be of use to them, independent of partnership-related interventions. The two themes commonly brought up included financial support and relief from regulatory burdens. Respondents repeatedly called for funding to support infrastructure repairs and upgrades, including debt-free or low-interest loans. They cited the lack of programs and grants to support very small systems, as well as constraints on access to support and funding. Some respondents indicated an interest in state assistance with long-term financial planning, including affordability analyses, rate-setting guidance, and asset management. Respondents also mentioned the cost of complying with regulations, with some characterizing regulations as an excessive and inadequately supported burden. Other suggestions included requests for help (and funding) to move from a system reliant on volunteers to professional staff; the need for state intervention in the broader management and development of water resources; and help adapting to climate change.

7. Conclusions

This research is neither an endorsement nor a rejection of partnerships as a strategy for supporting small CWS. Survey results make apparent that partnerships are not a panacea; but they also suggest partnerships may yield meaningful benefits for a discernible subset of systems.

This research also demonstrates that state policies designed to support or foster partnership formation are, at present, of limited effectiveness. To better serve small CWS that are interested in partnerships, states will need to adapt, redesign, and potentially supplement existing policies to more effectively reach and support relevant small CWS. However, the findings make it clear that partnerships are not a universal solution, and that other interventions and support may be more useful to some small CWS.

While the survey findings offer valuable insight into the circumstances and perspectives of small CWS across the United States, several limitations bear on the interpretation of the results. Even though respondents represent approximately 13% of small CWS nationwide, this may not be a representative sample. Surveys were distributed to the full set of small CWS for which contact information was available, but the lowest-capacity systems may not have been reached due to barriers related to email access or postal delivery, limited staff capacity, motivation, or available time to respond. There may also have been other causes of non-response bias; for instance, respondents with strong prior orientations toward or against partnerships may have been disproportionately inclined to participate. Beyond sampling considerations, a further limitation is that, while the survey incorporated multiple opportunities for open-ended comments, the structured survey items may not have fully captured all the factors that meaningfully influence partnership-formation decisions.

Several directions for future research emerge from survey findings. First, there are likely meaningful subgroups of water systems for which partnerships of varying types are more and less beneficial. Subsequent work should focus on identifying the system characteristics and contextual factors associated with differential suitability for partnership arrangements. This includes better characterizing variation in the barriers and drawbacks that different systems experience, as well as more refined differentiation across partnership types and among potential partners. The differential effects of policies designed to foster partnership formation also warrant investigation, including understanding why a small but notable share of respondents indicated that existing policies had made them less likely to pursue partnerships. There is also a need to understand the full set of concerns and drivers of small CWS attitudes towards partnerships, including what makes some small CWS more inclined to interorganizational collaboration and others more staunchly independent.

Future research should also examine more systematically which types of partnerships perform better in which contexts, and why, including identifying partnership arrangements that demonstrate effectiveness and could be feasibly replicated or transferred across settings. It is worth noting that the present survey, consistent with much of the existing research on partnerships, focuses predominantly on dyadic partnership arrangements, in which a small CWS partners with a single other entity (with the notable exception of WARN programs). One-to-many partnerships are less common and not frequently the focus of state policies yet may be a useful avenue for increasing the capacity of small CWS while reducing concerns and transaction costs associated with partnership formation. As one illustrative example, Arizona’s Department of Environmental Quality administers a water quality “Monitoring Assistance Program” in which all small CWS are required to participate. These systems pay a fee, the sum of which the state uses to hire a private contractor to collect, transport, analyze and report results from the monitoring (ADEQ 2025). The potential for other models of one-to-many partnerships for monitoring and other services is underexplored and merits further attention.

In conclusion, partnerships represent a mechanism through which meaningful benefits could be realized for some small CWS, but they have limitations. To better support small CWS, it is key for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners alike to adopt a considerably more nuanced approach to examining and promoting partnerships, one that focuses deliberately on which types of partnerships are most appropriate given the specific circumstances of individual CWS. Of equal importance is the need to expand the range of mechanisms—including but not limited to partnerships—available to support small CWS in addressing the challenges they face. Safe and reliable drinking water is an essential public good. Identifying effective means of supporting its provision across all communities, including the smallest and most resource-constrained, is an obligation shared by researchers, policymakers, and society at large.

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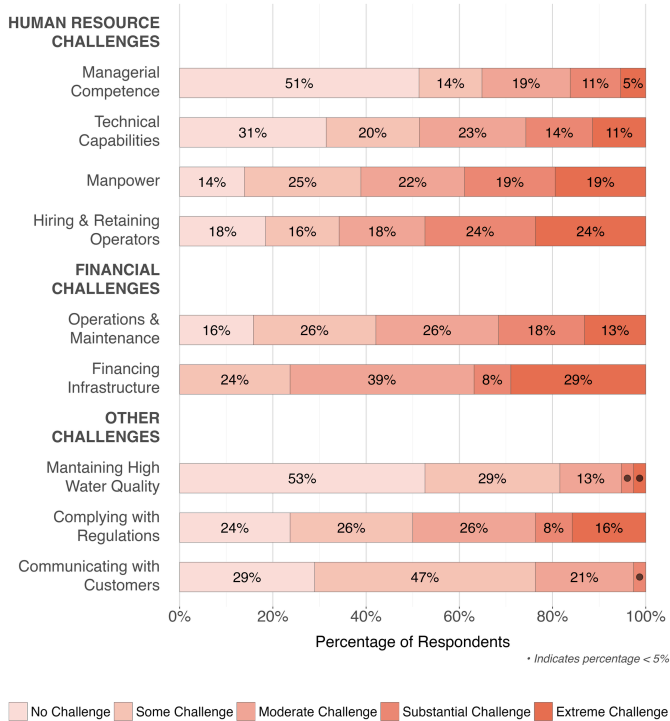
State-Level Survey Responses

This appendix offers a state-by-state synthesis of the survey results. While many findings align with national trends, the geographic, operational, social, and regulatory context of water provision varies significantly across jurisdictions. These state-level contexts influence local water system operations, as well as the perceived benefits, drawbacks, and barriers to partnership formation. Further, each state has implemented its own unique set of policies to encourage partnership formation.

For each state, this section includes a summary of survey respondents alongside figures illustrating aggregate data on operational challenges, the potential gains from partnerships, and the reported effects of state-level policies.



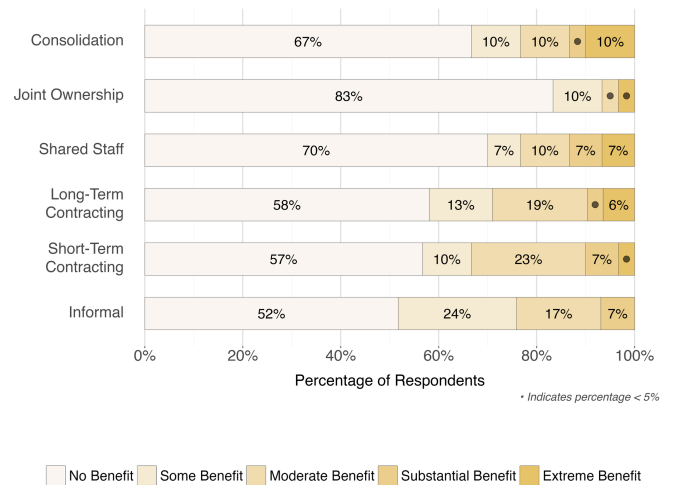
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



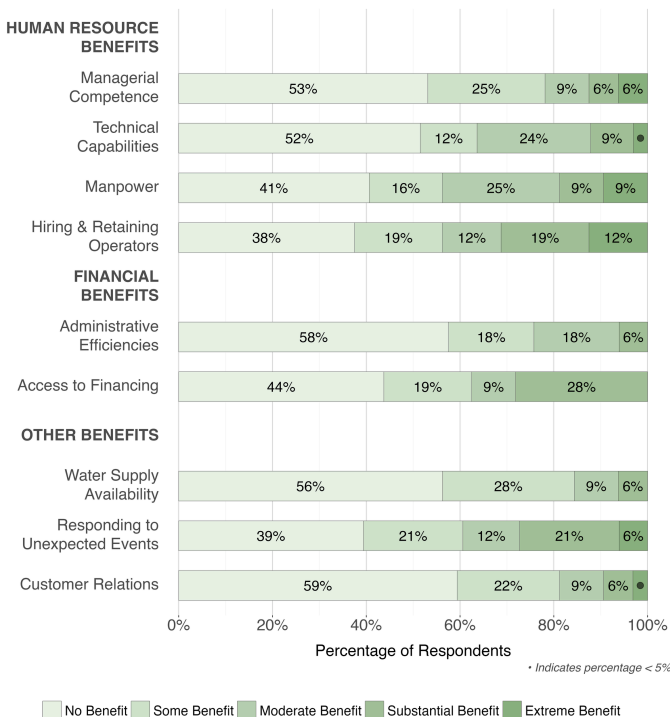
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CWS (#)	Response Rate
All Small CWS	39	381	10%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	33	367	9%
Private	2	13	46%
Community	4		
Other	0	1	0%

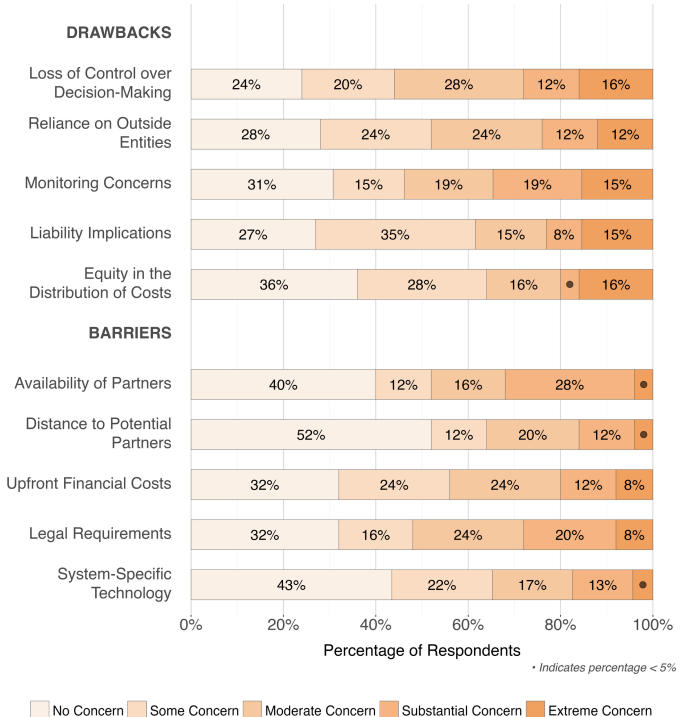
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

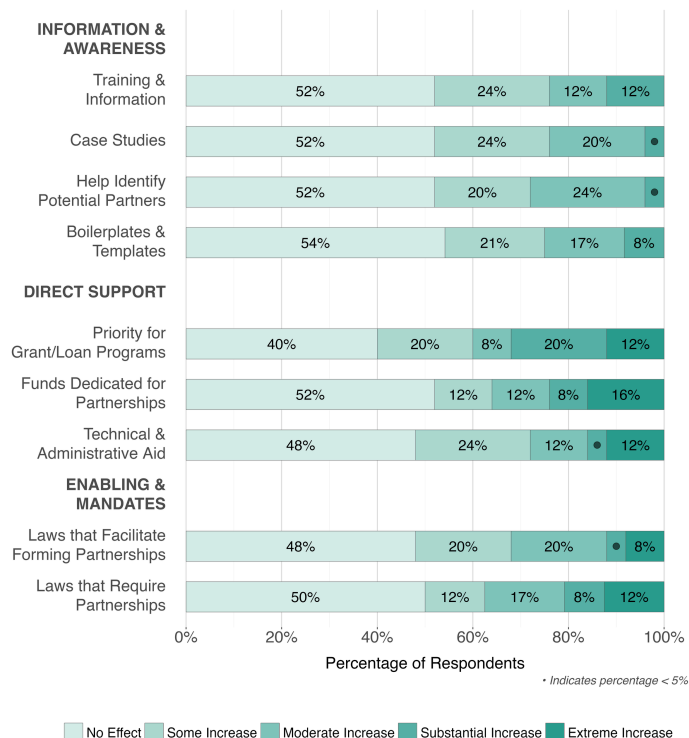


ALABAMA

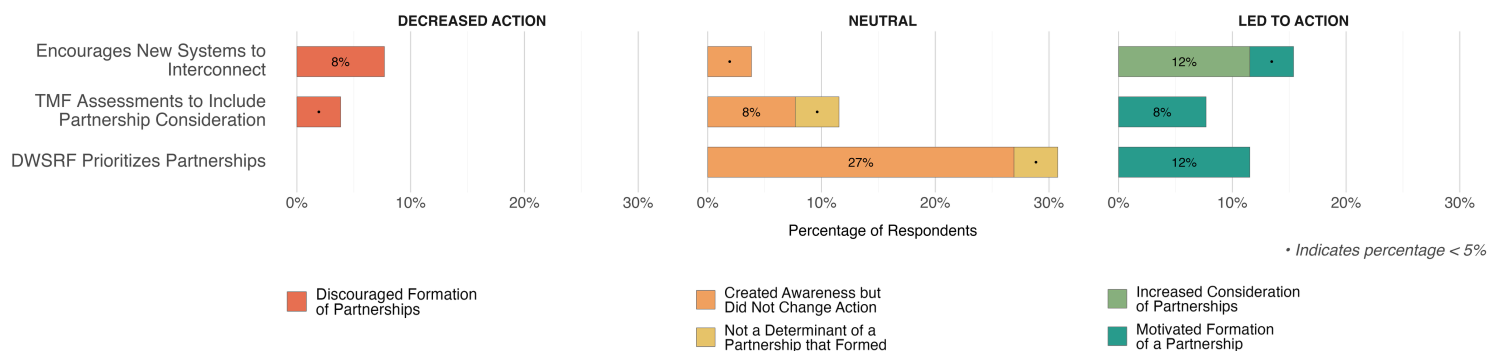
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	6%	0%	3%
Joint Ownership	3%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	3%	0%	14%
Long-Term Contracting	6%	0%	32%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	3%	26%
Informal	3%	6%	9%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

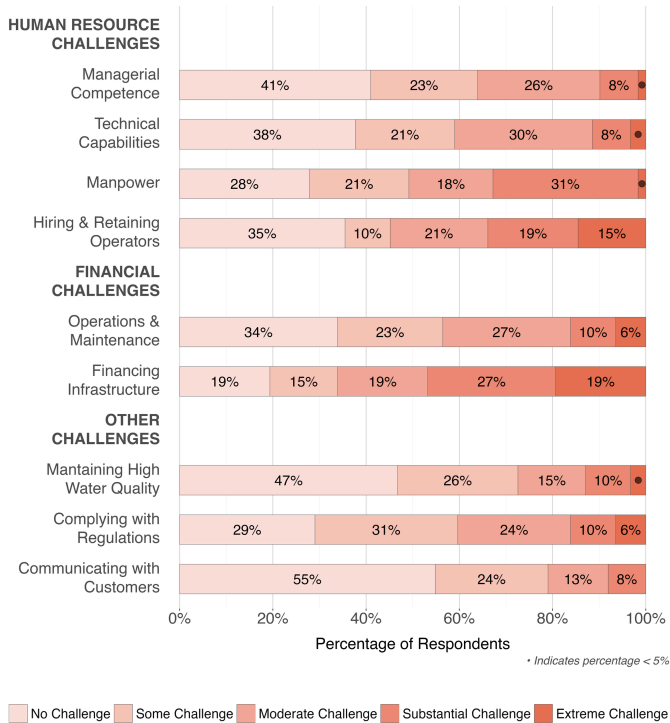


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





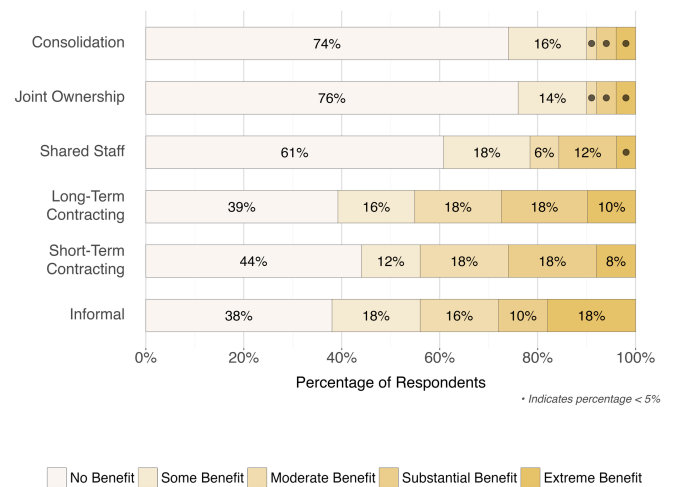
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



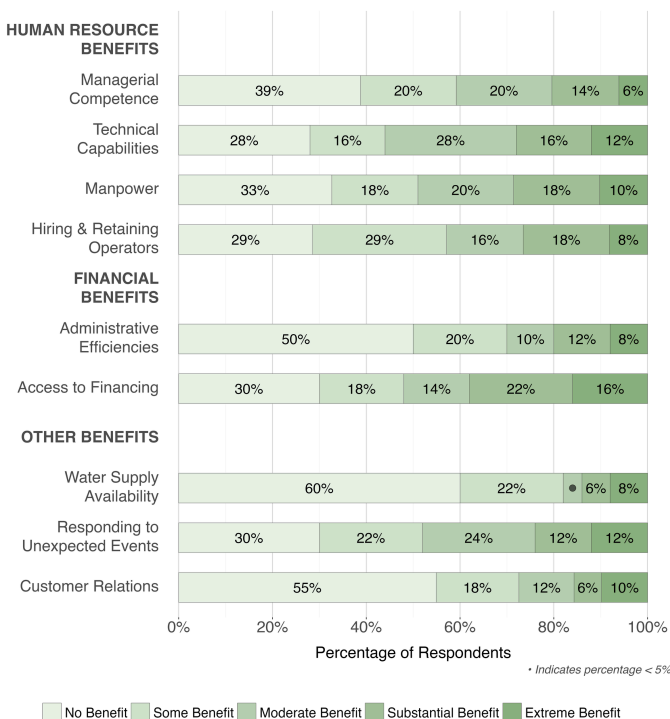
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	68	399	17%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	30	121	25%
Private	16	182	16%
Community	13		
Other	9	96	9%

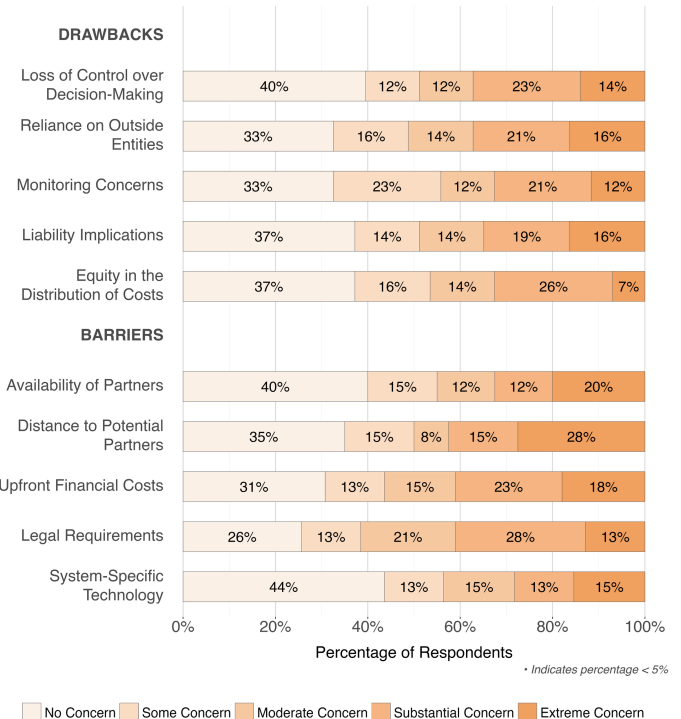
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

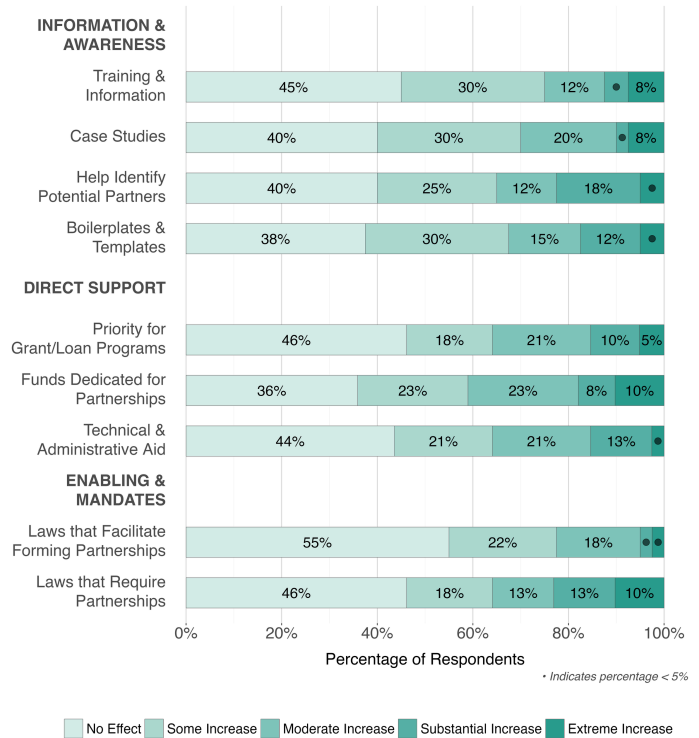




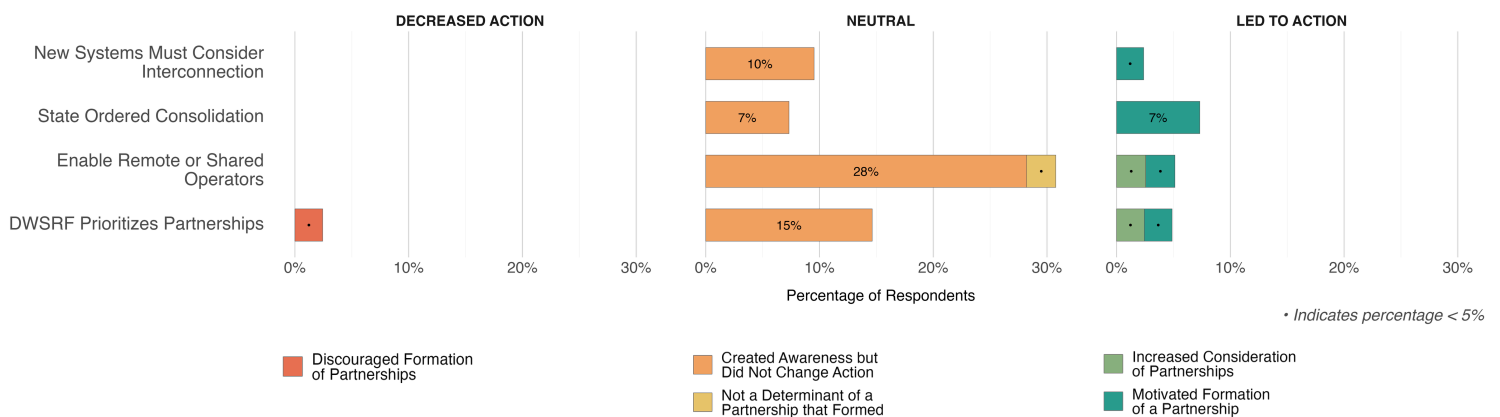
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	4%	4%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	6%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	6%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	2%	32%
Short-Term Contracting	12%	2%	24%
Informal	2%	0%	23%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

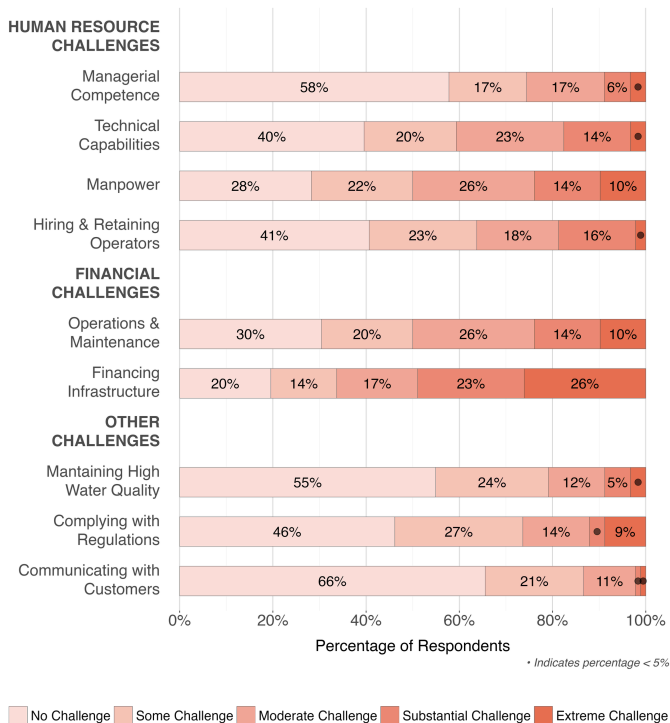


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



ARIZONA

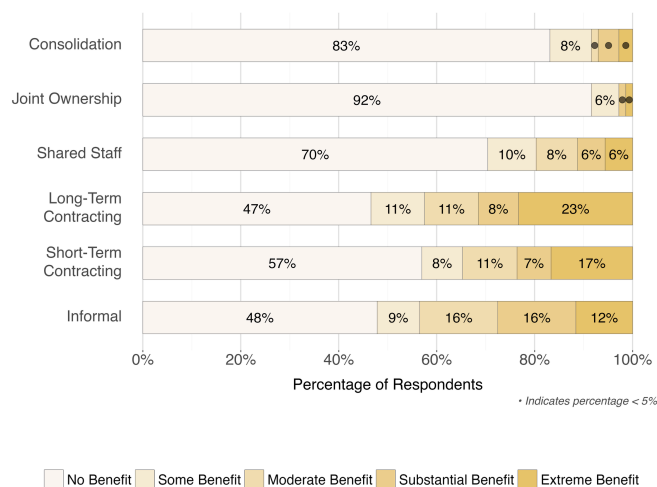
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



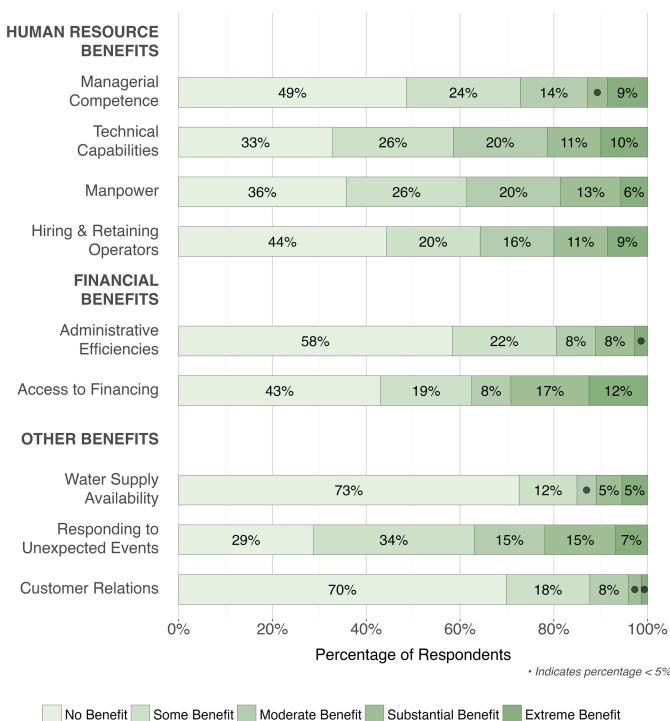
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	100	671	15%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	25	59	42%
Private	43	413	17%
Community	28		
Other	4	199	2%

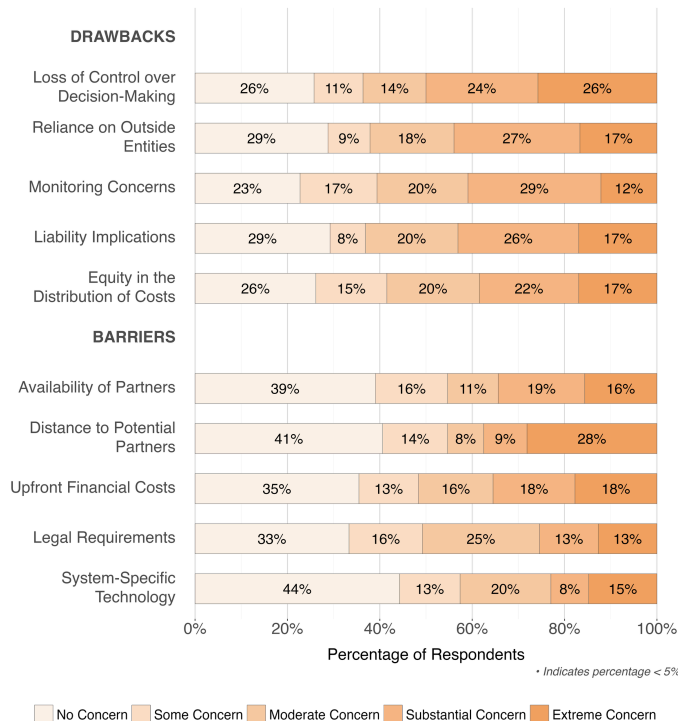
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

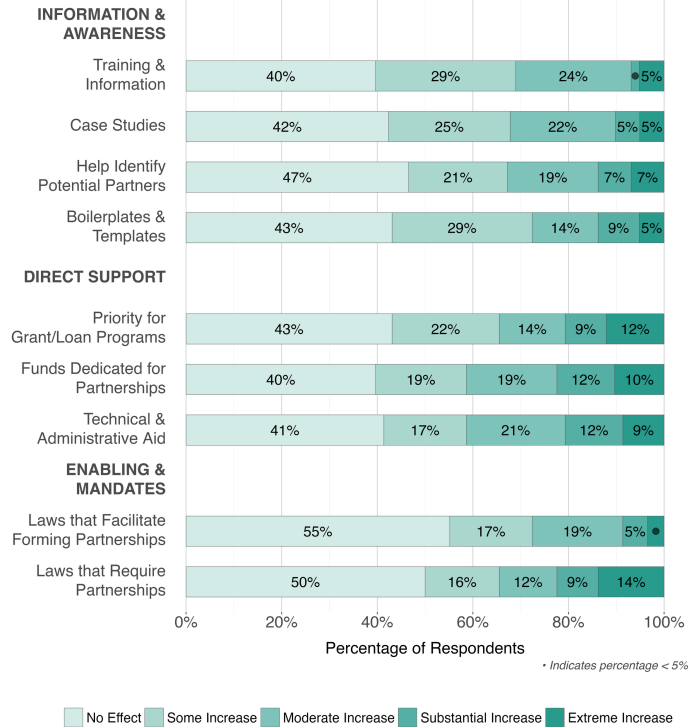


ARIZONA

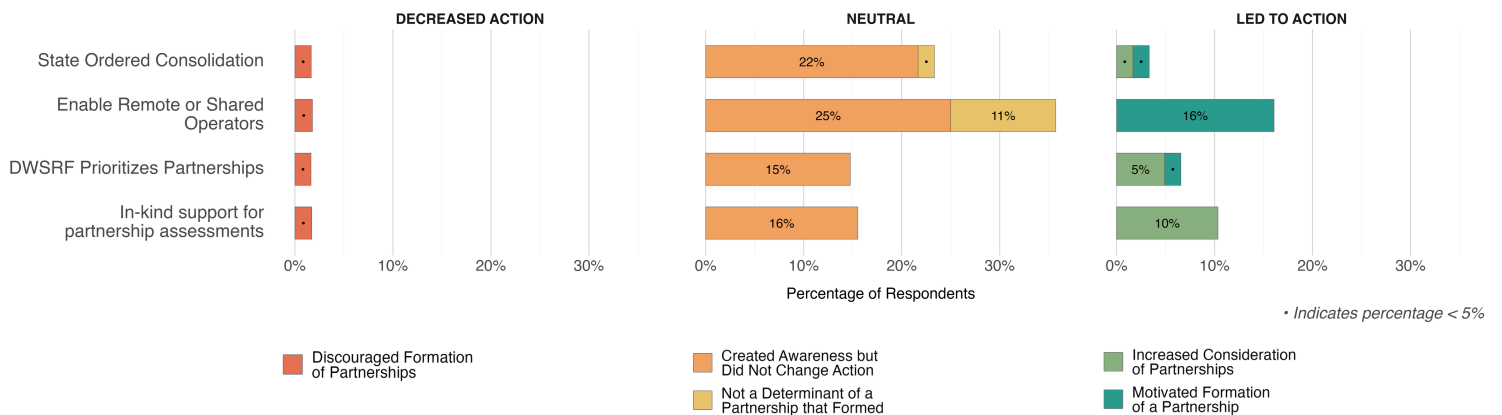
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	4%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	8%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	1%	43%
Short-Term Contracting	5%	1%	28%
Informal	0%	0%	31%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

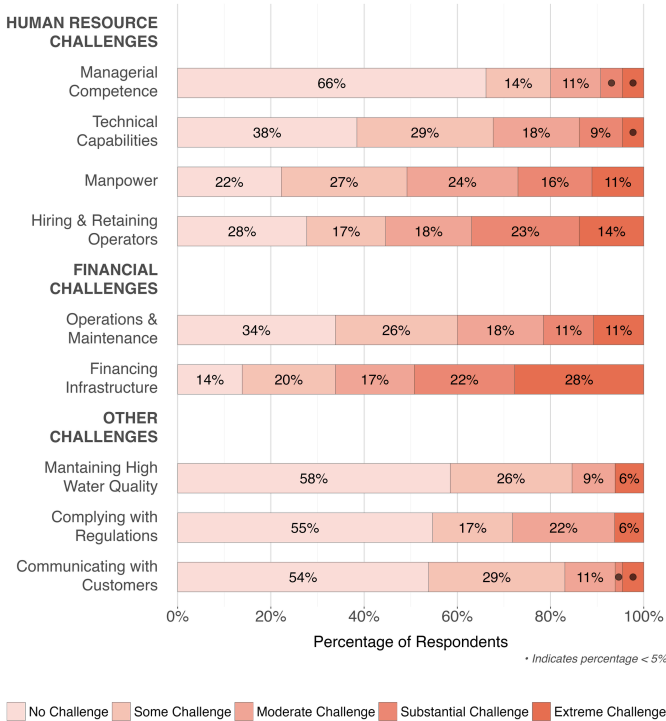


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



ARKANSAS

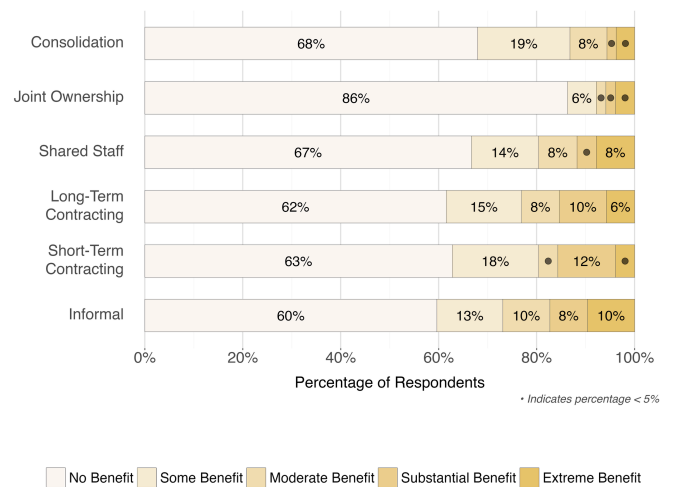
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



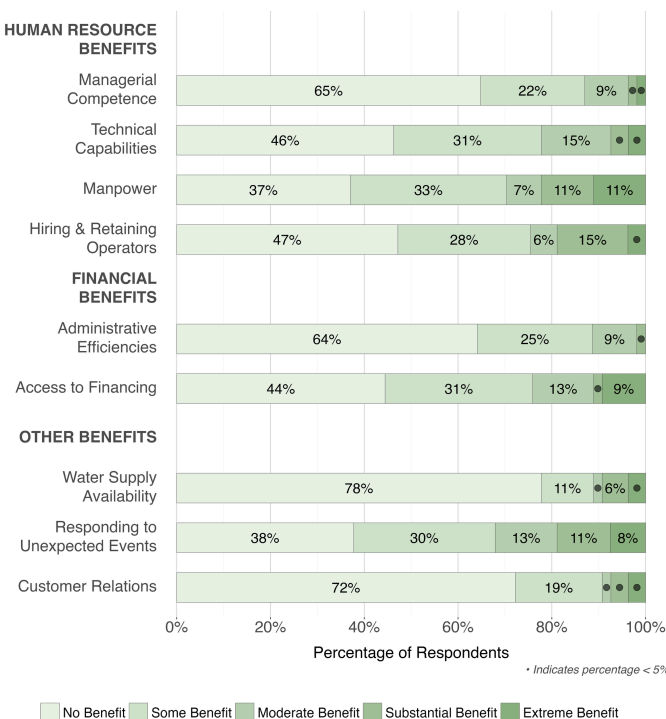
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	71	625	11%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	58	527	11%
Private	2	77	16%
Community	10		
Other	1	21	5%

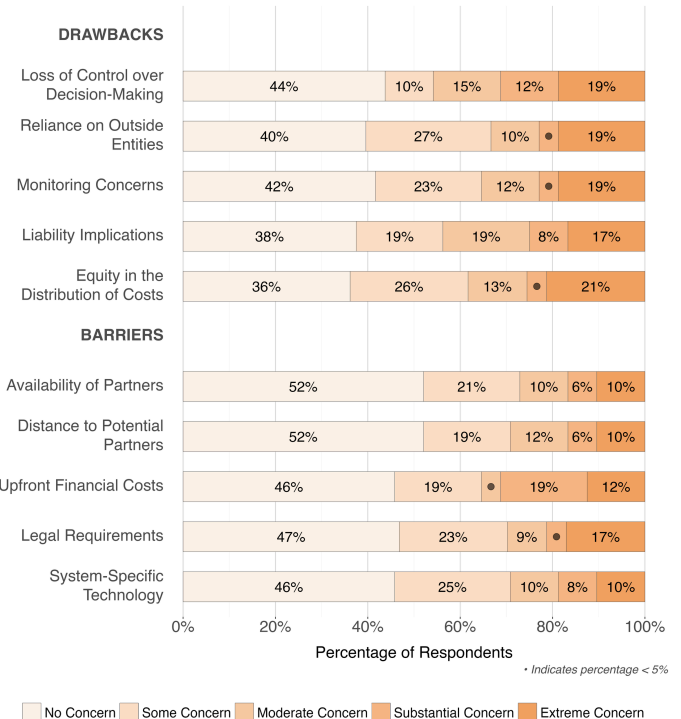
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

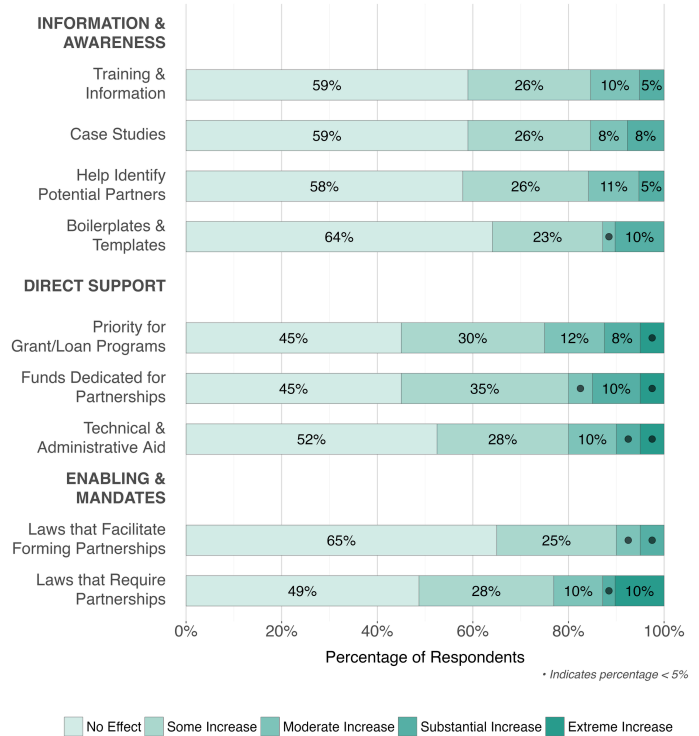


ARKANSAS

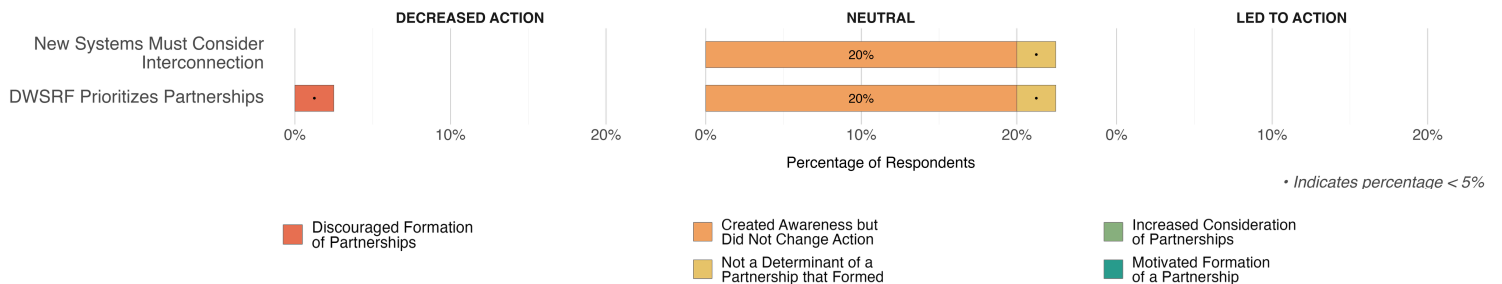
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	4%	5%
Joint Ownership	0%	2%	4%
Shared Staff	2%	4%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	2%	4%	25%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	4%	11%
Informal	4%	2%	22%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

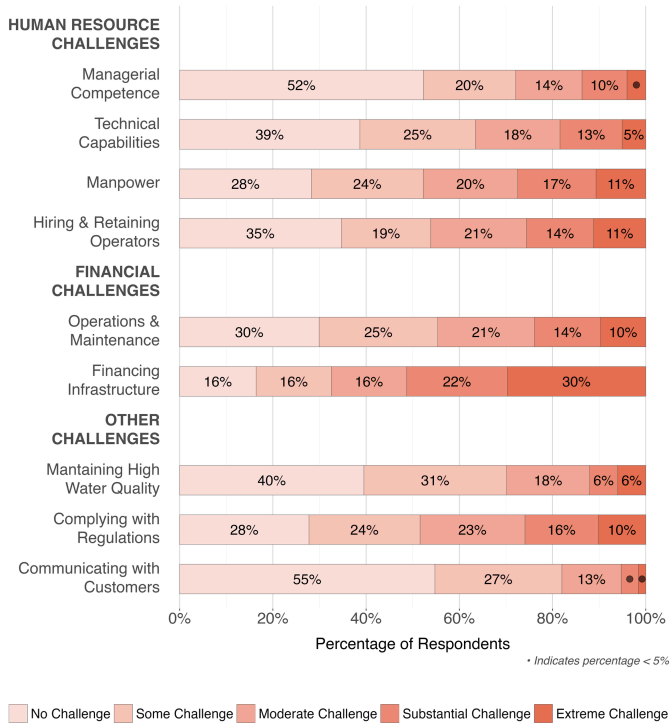


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



CALIFORNIA

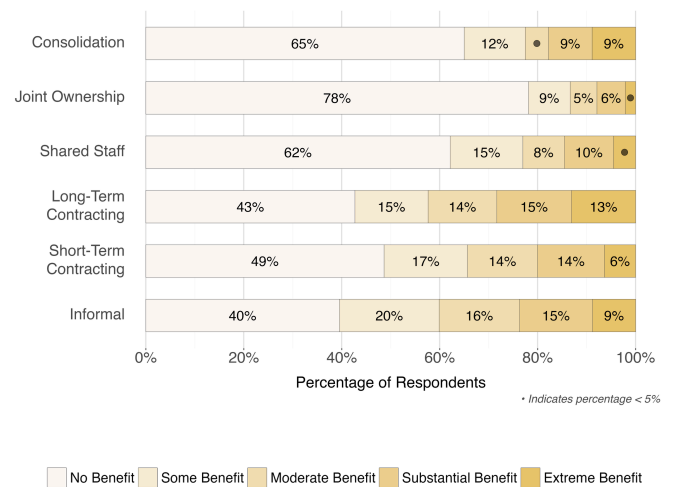
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



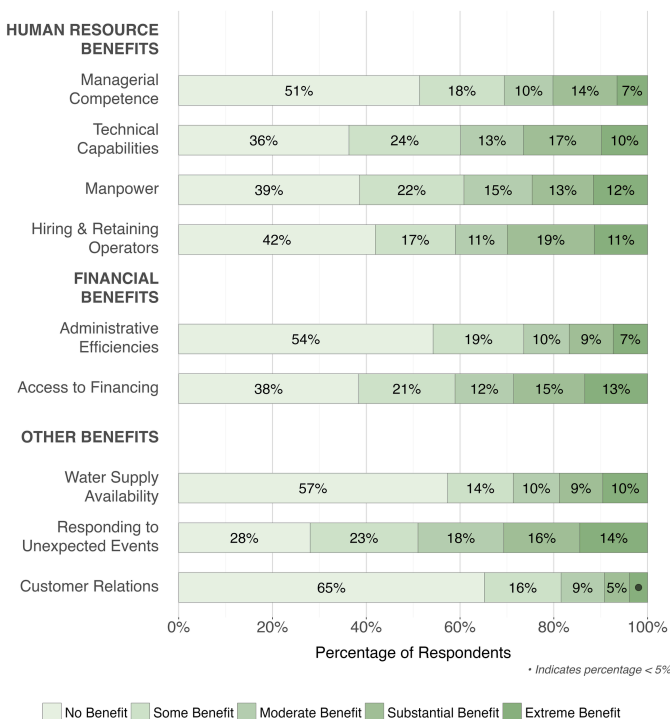
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	422	2411	18%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	135	666	20%
Private	117	1674	16%
Community	158		
Other	12	71	17%

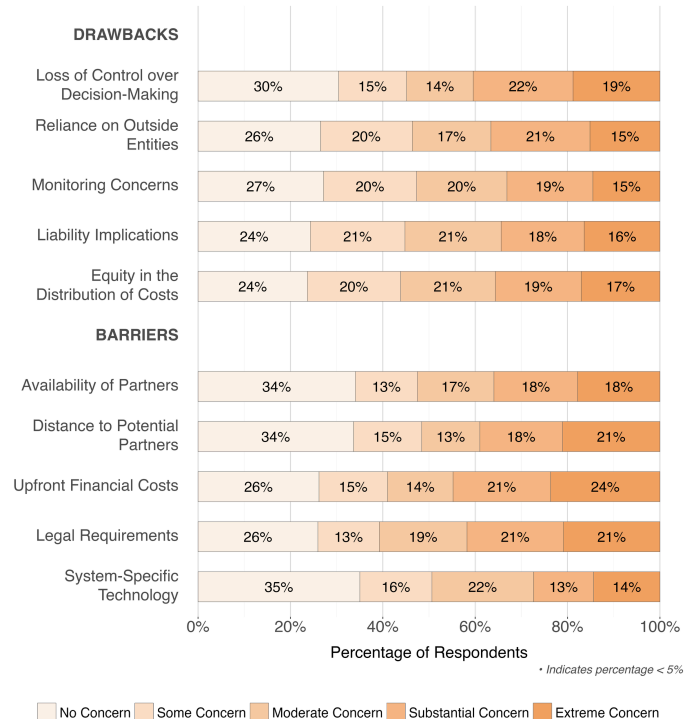
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

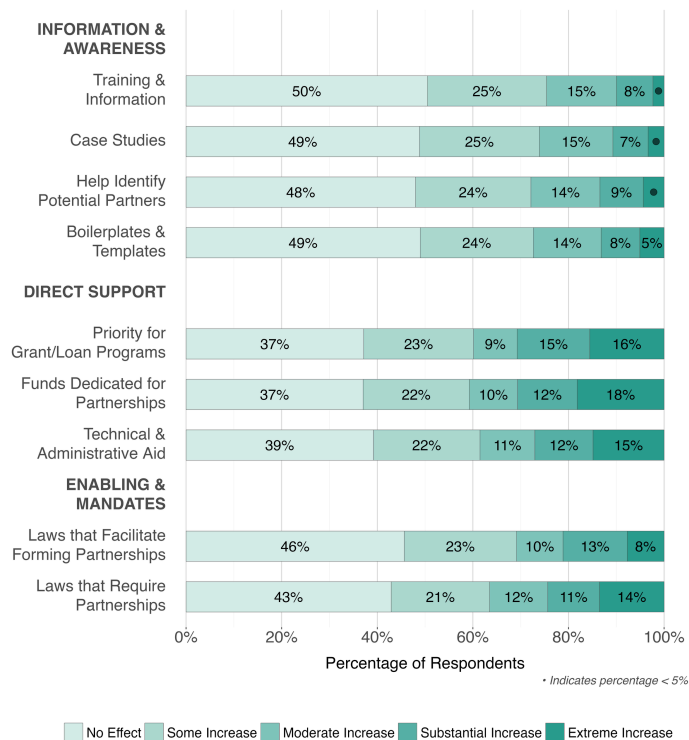


CALIFORNIA

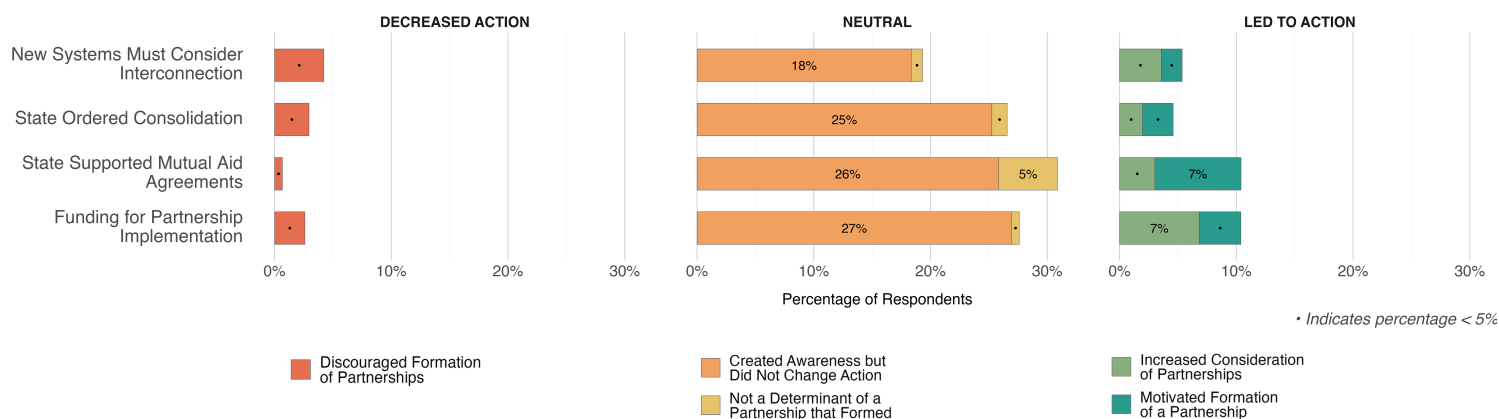
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	1%	7%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	4%
Shared Staff	0%	1%	6%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	1%	33%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	1%	23%
Informal	3%	0%	29%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

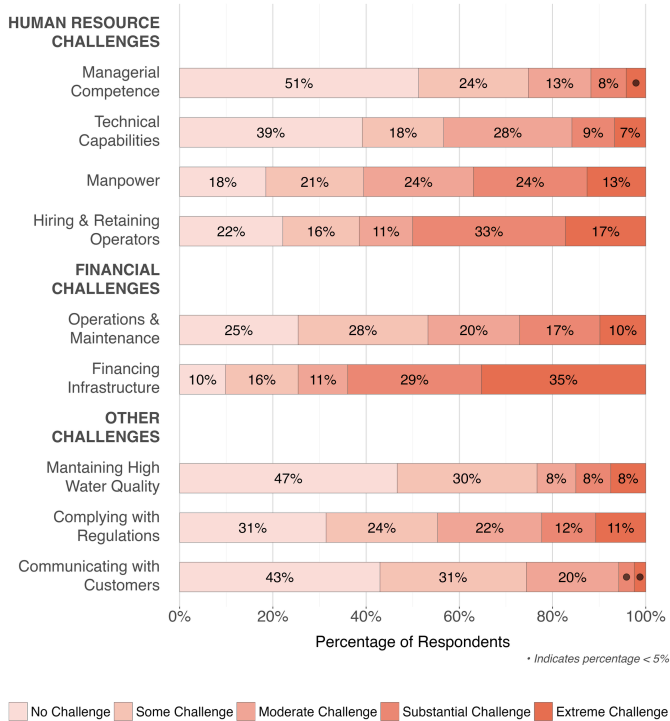


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



COLORADO

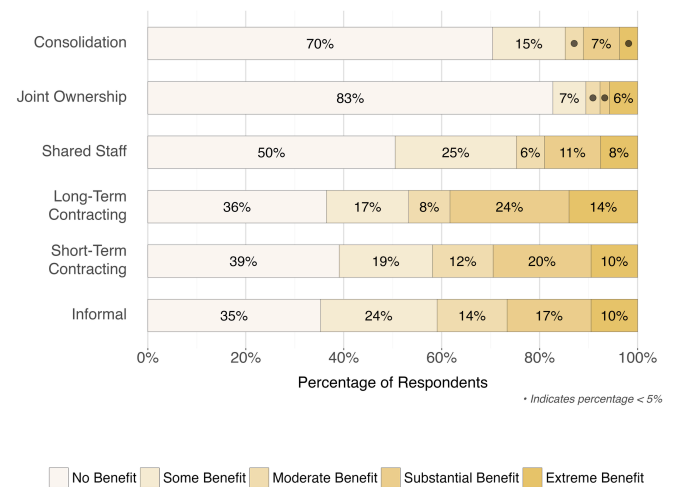
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



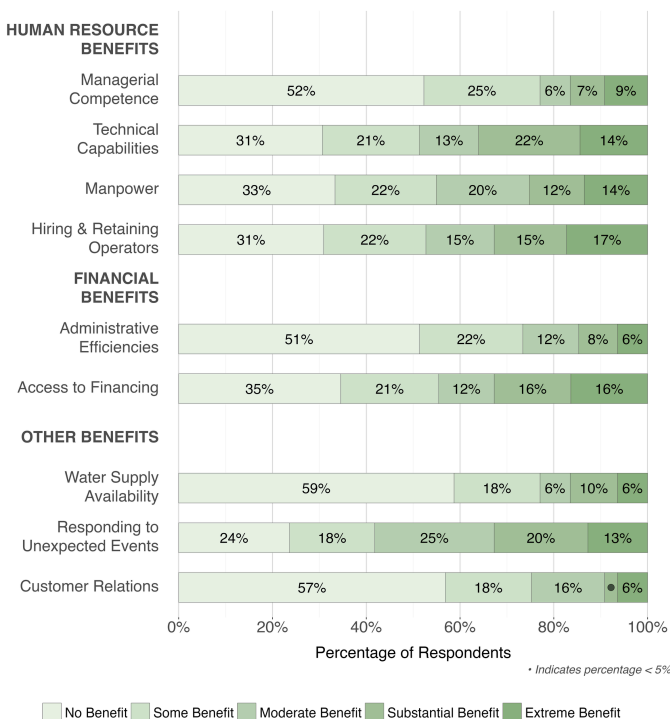
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	135	860	16%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	71	393	18%
Private	25	461	13%
Community	34		
Other	5	6	83%

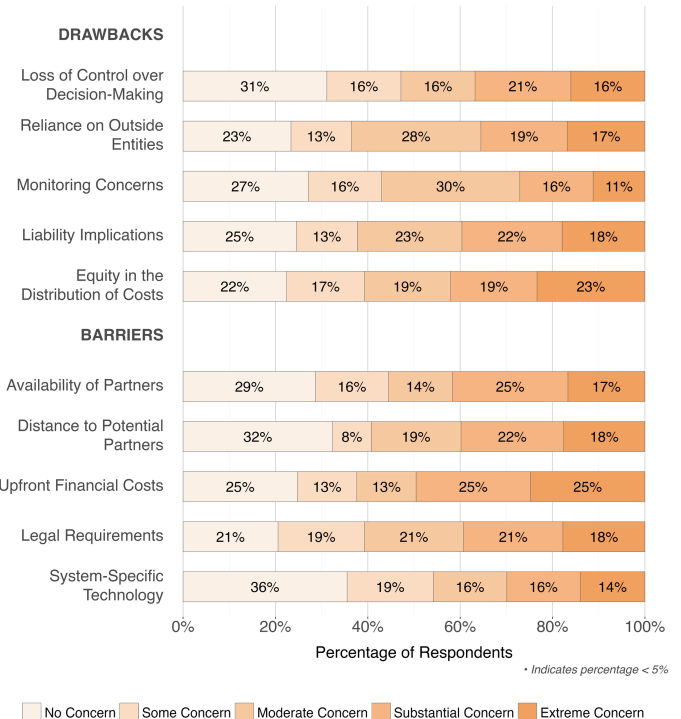
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

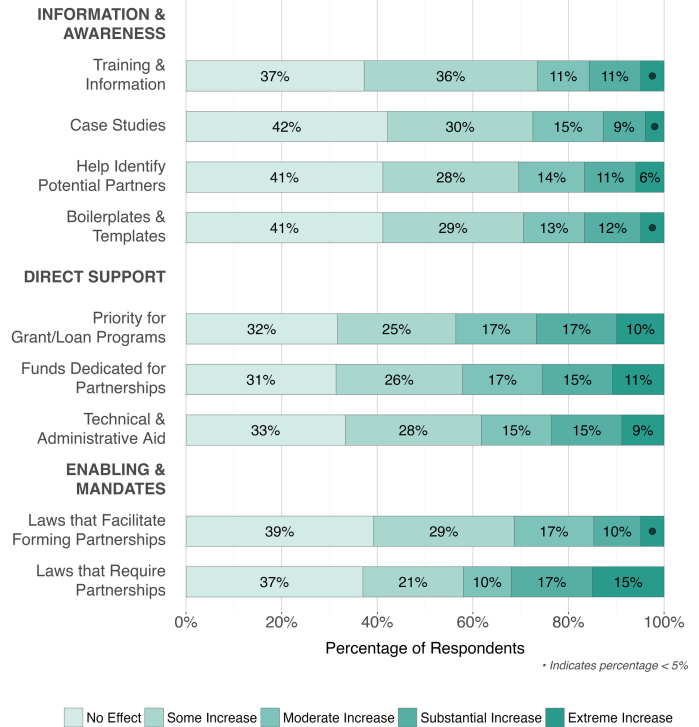


COLORADO

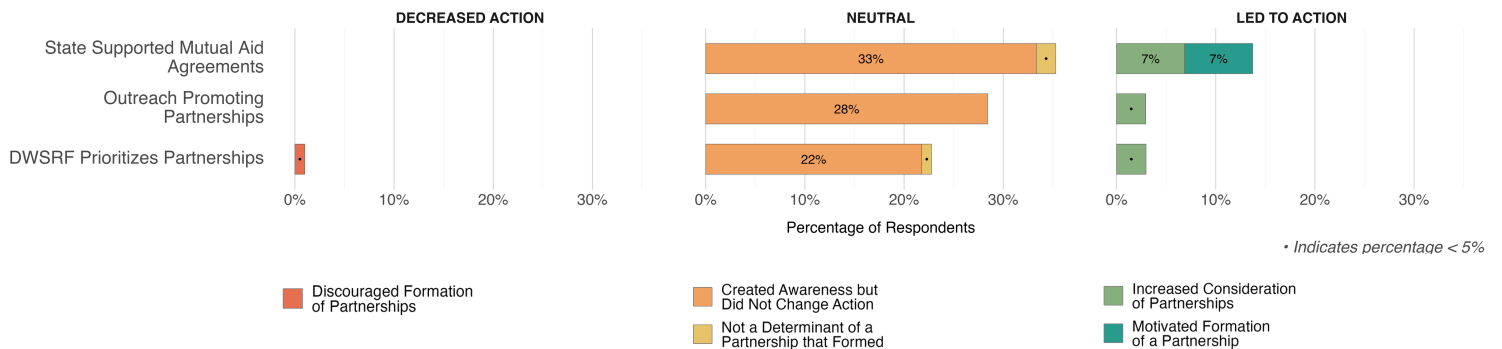
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	5%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	11%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	1%	17%
Short-Term Contracting	9%	1%	65%
Informal	1%	0%	64%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

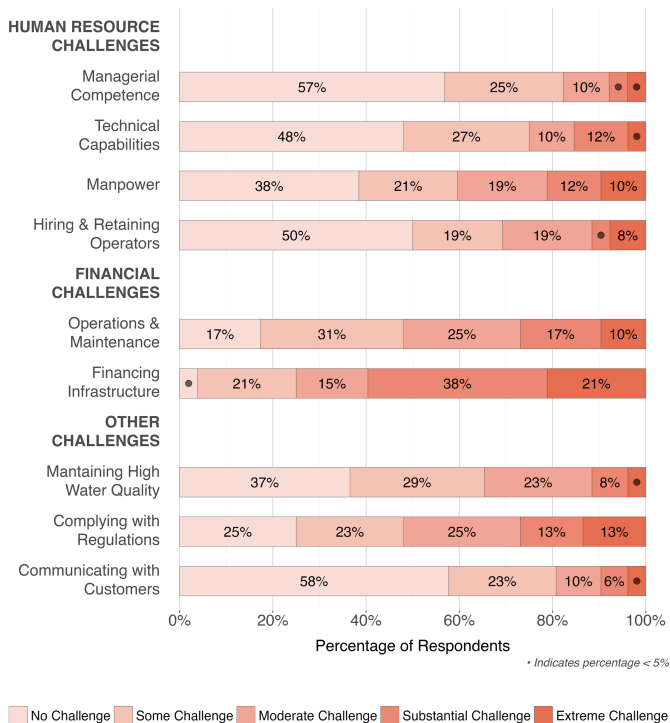


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



CONNECTICUT

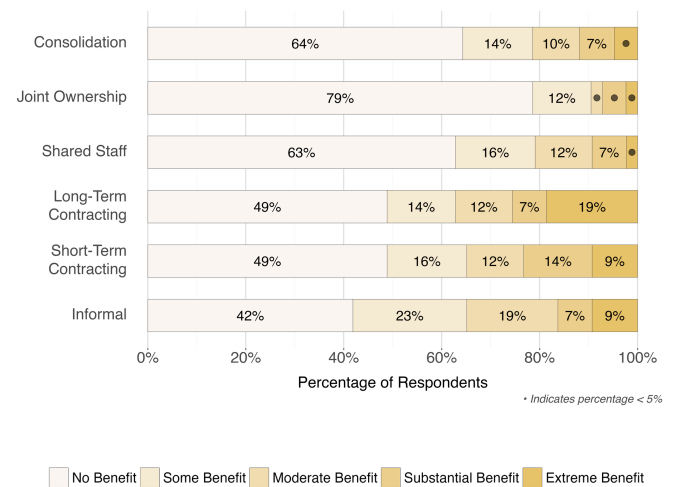
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



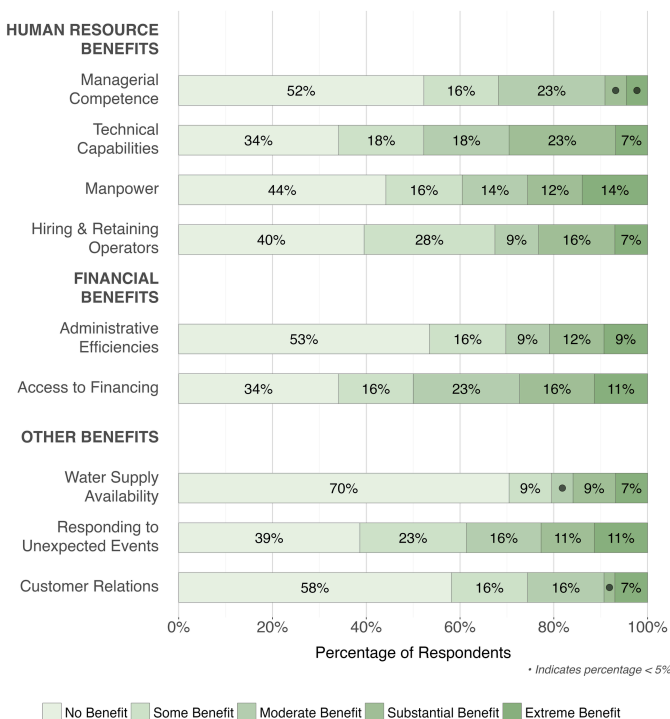
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	59	437	14%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	16	72	22%
Private	18	362	11%
Community	23		
Other	2	3	67%

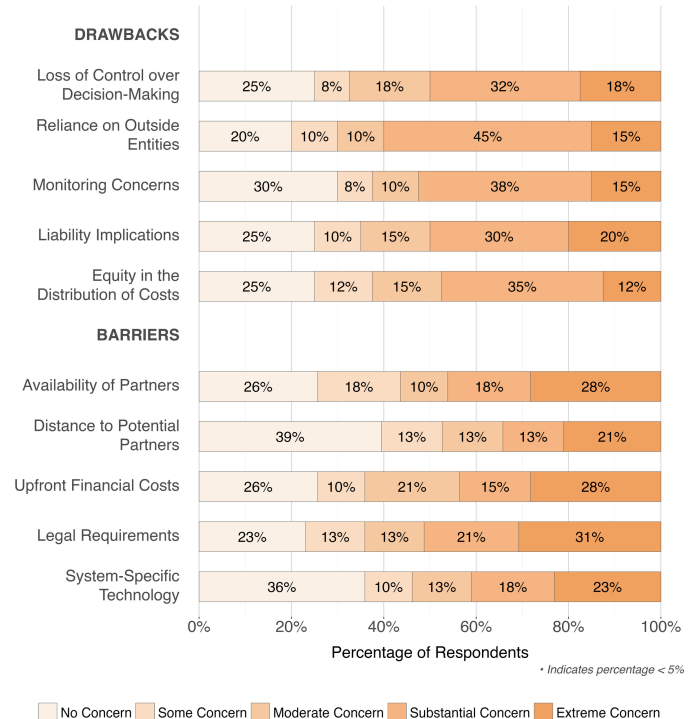
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

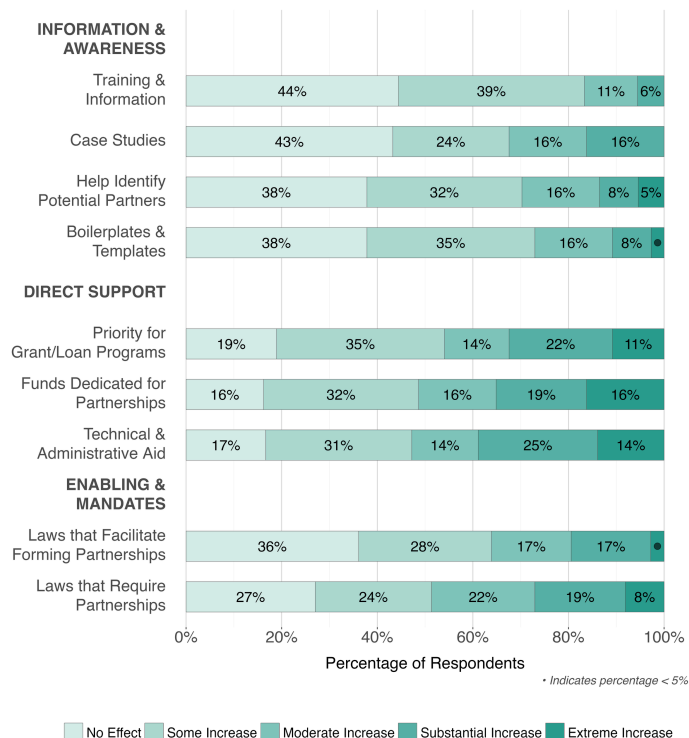


CONNECTICUT

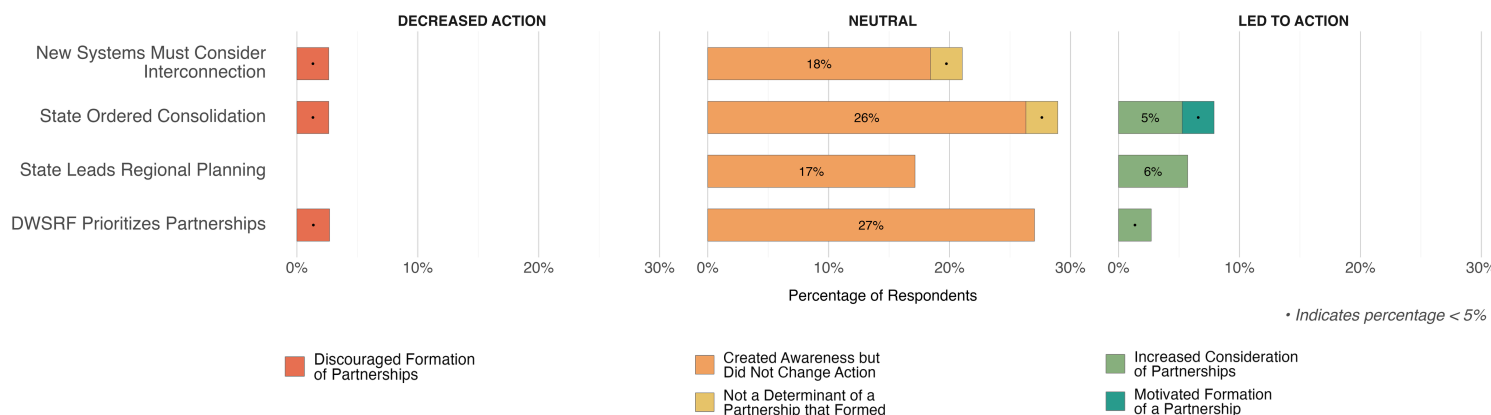
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	2%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	2%
Long-Term Contracting	2%	0%	48%
Short-Term Contracting	5%	5%	27%
Informal	0%	2%	22%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

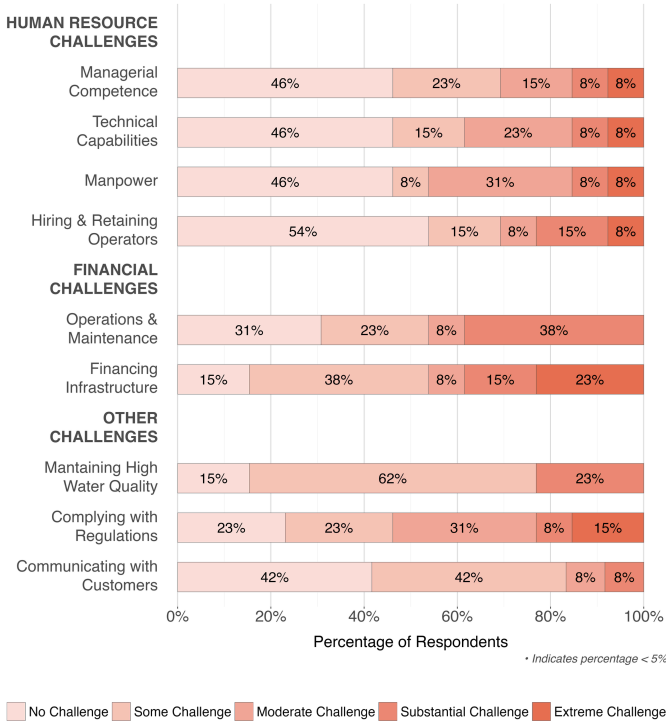


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



DELAWARE

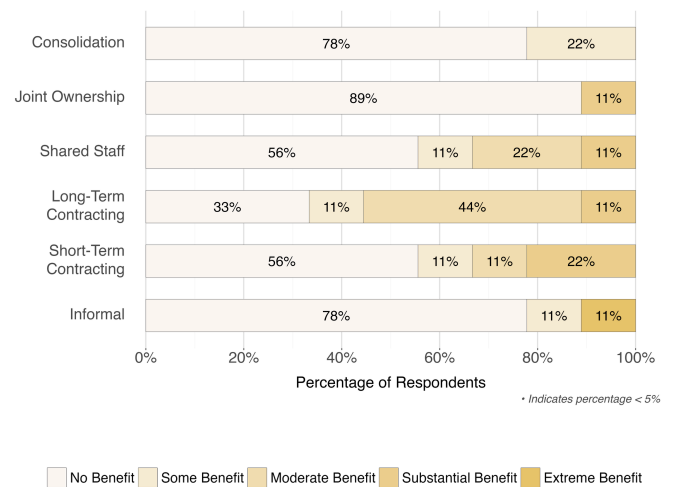
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



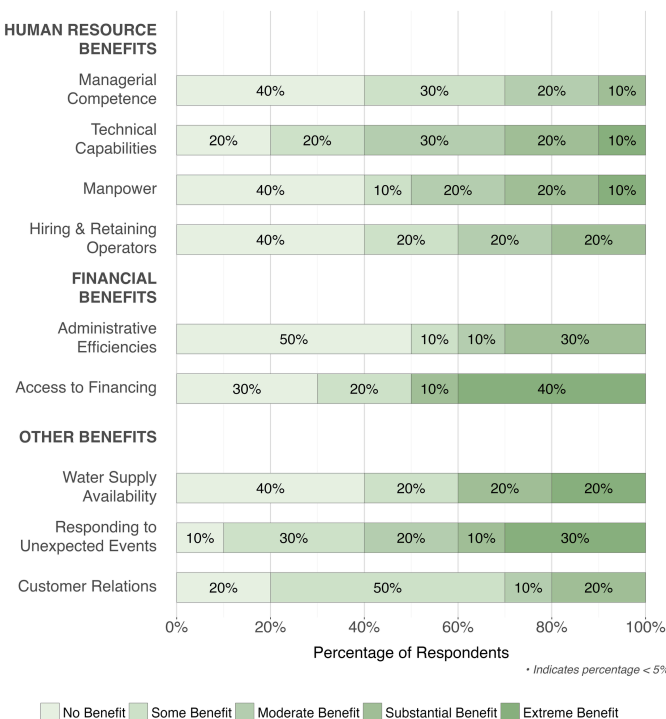
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	16	184	9%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	6	24	25%
Private	9	158	6%
Community	1		
Other	0	2	0%

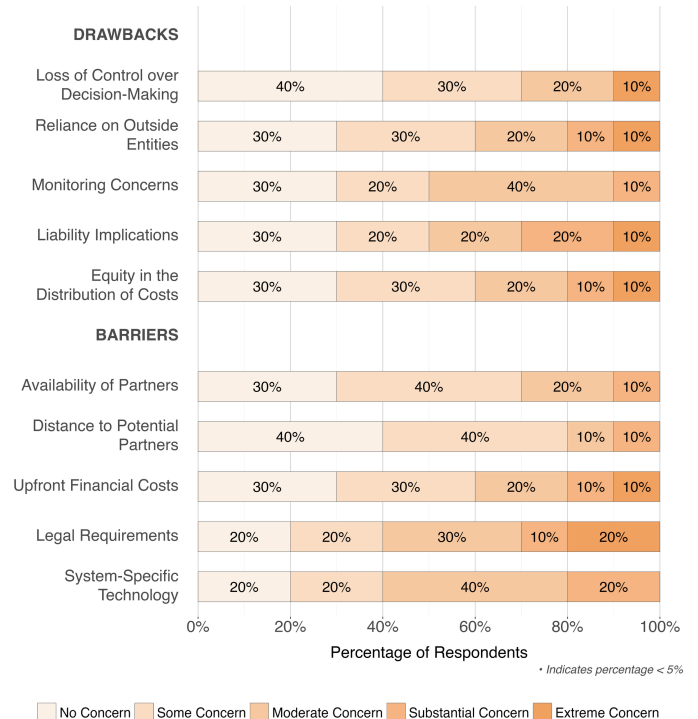
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

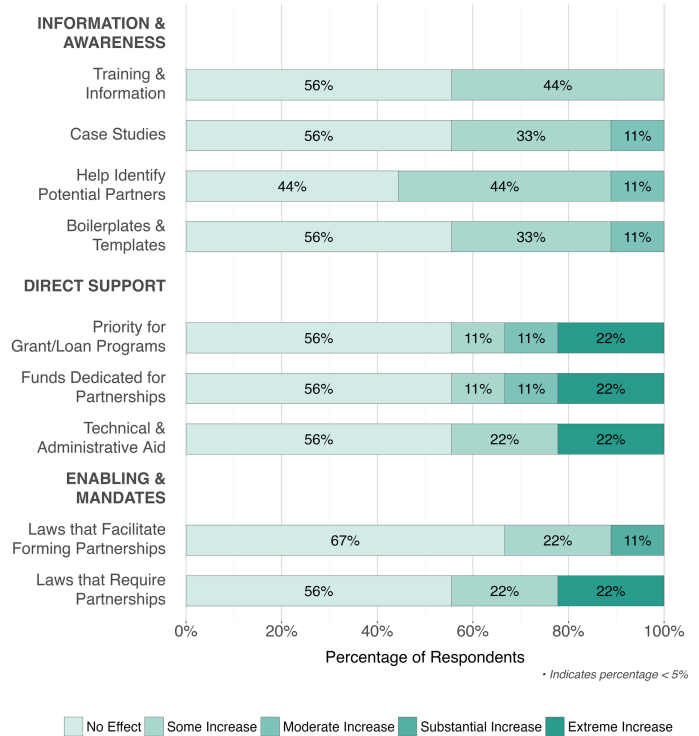


DELAWARE

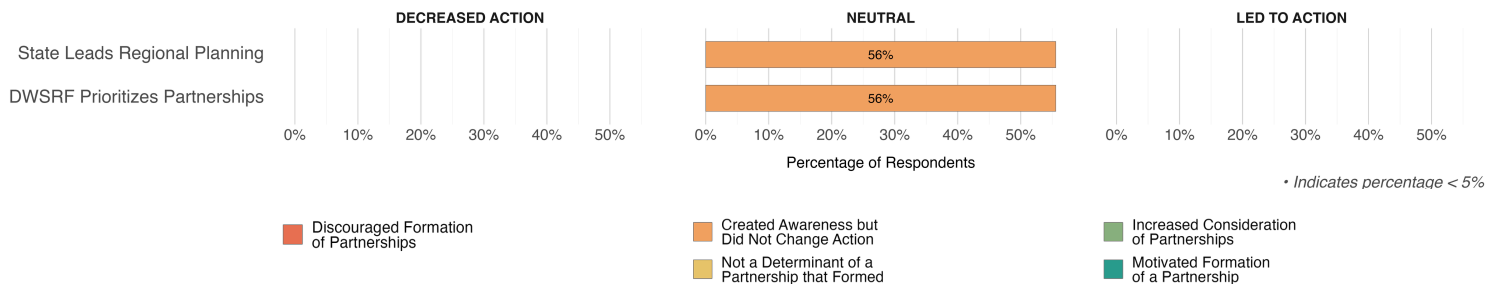
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	0%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	9%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	17%
Short-Term Contracting	0%	0%	18%
Informal	0%	0%	9%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

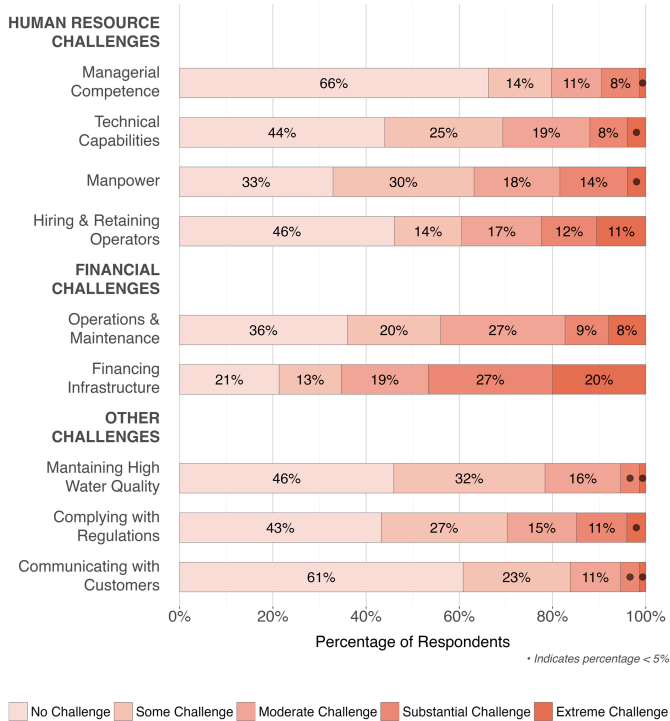


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



FLORIDA

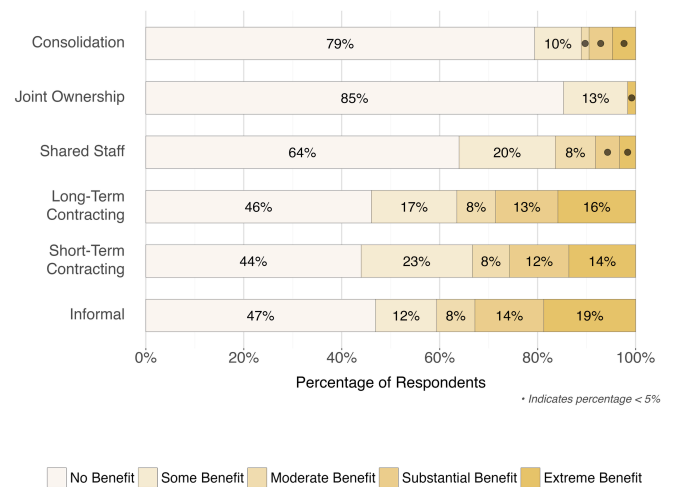
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



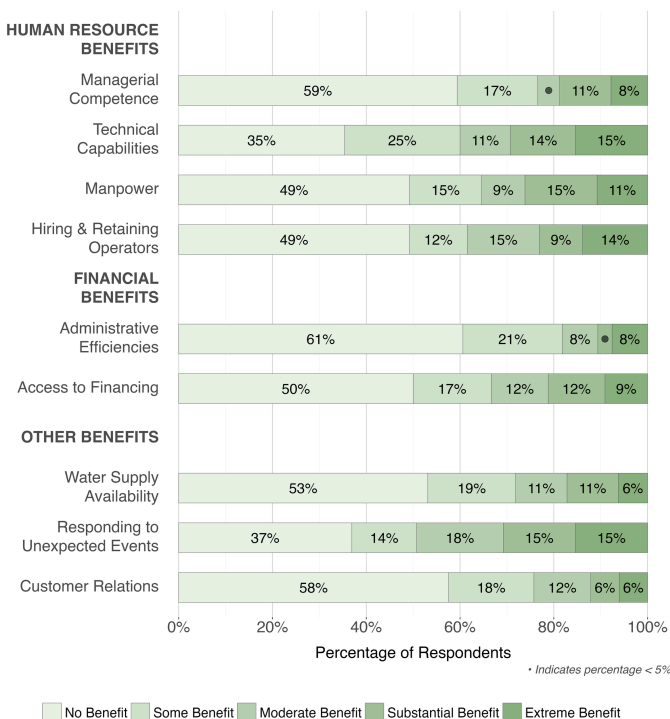
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	86	1369	6%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	34	261	13%
Private	29	908	6%
Community	22		
Other	1	200	1%

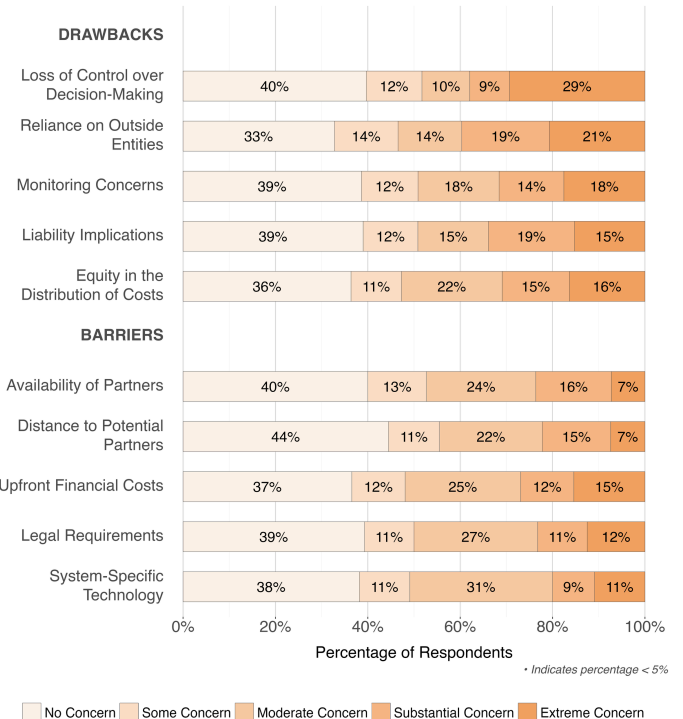
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

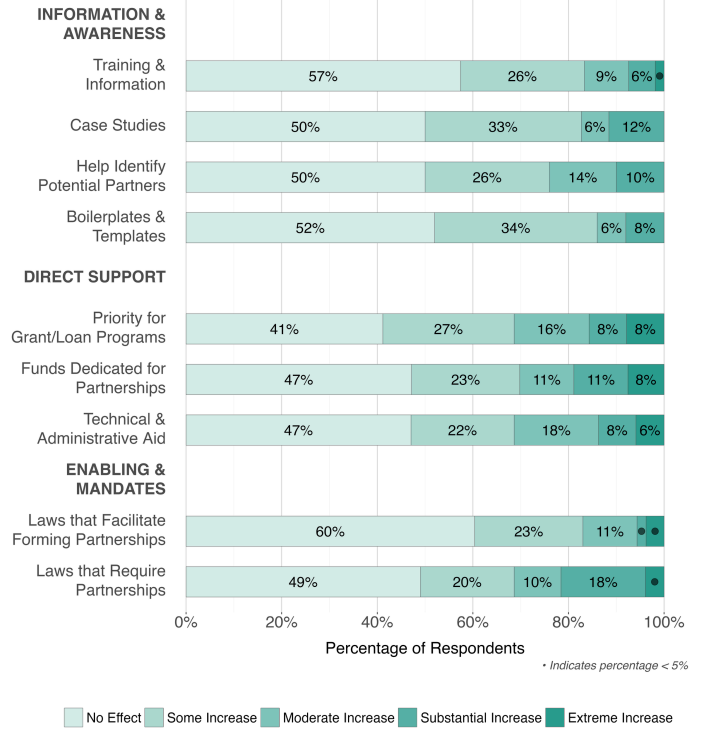




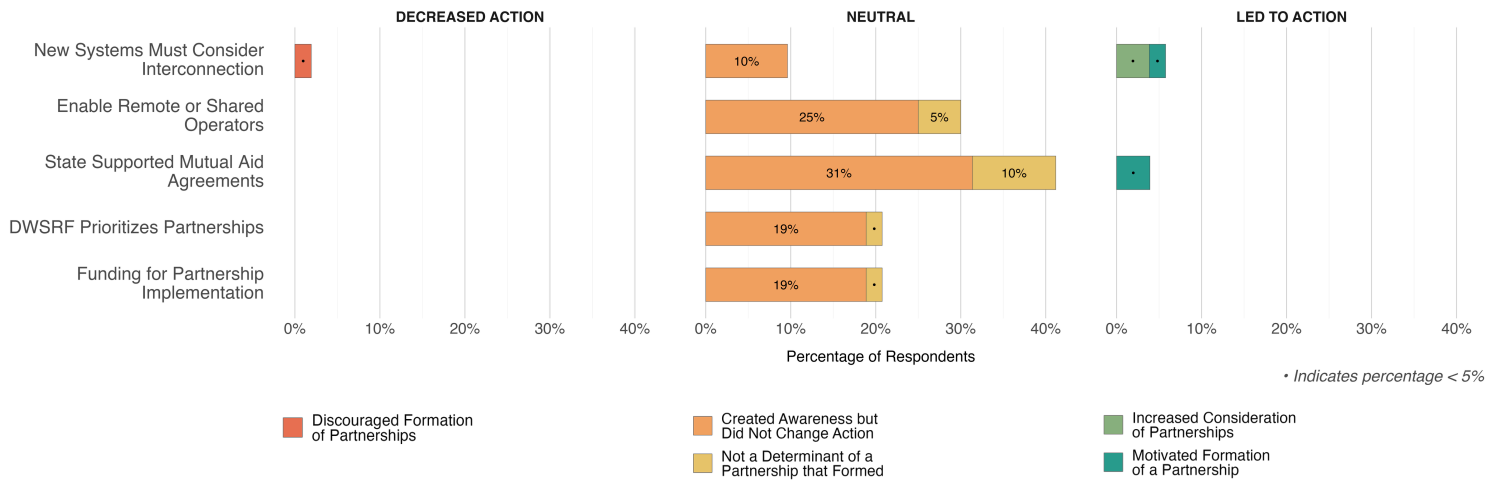
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	4%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	1%
Long-Term Contracting	4%	1%	38%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	1%	28%
Informal	5%	0%	35%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

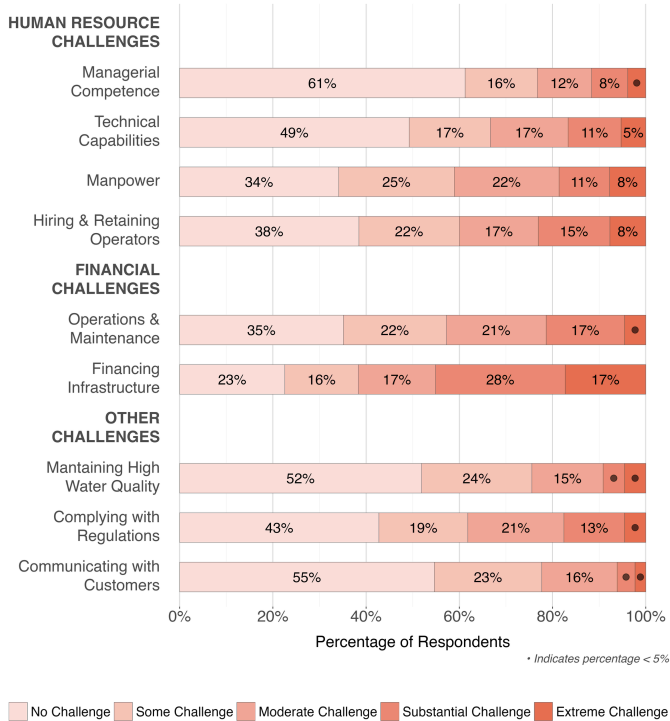


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



GEORGIA

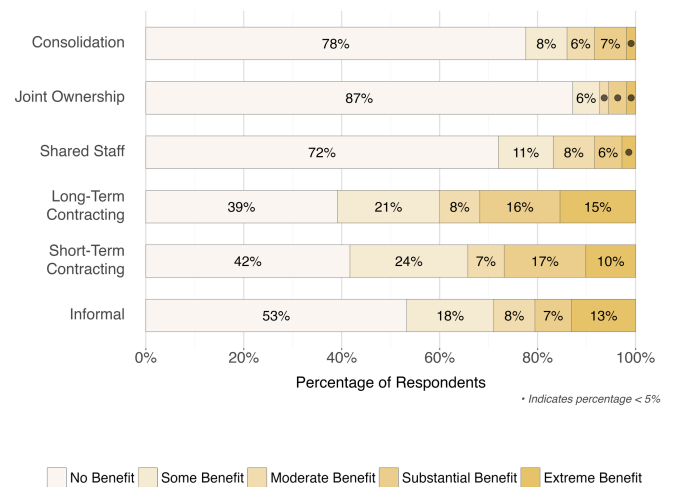
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



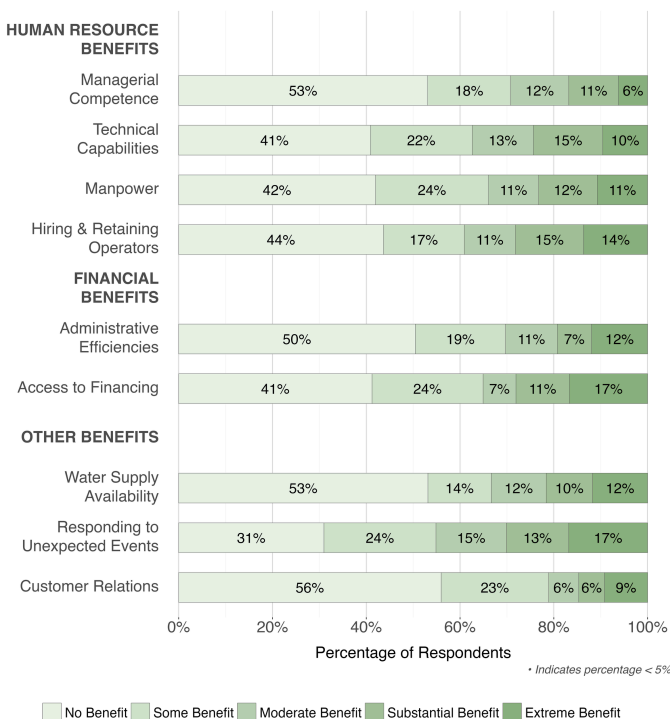
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	152	1614	9%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	84	482	17%
Private	47	1119	6%
Community	18		
Other	3	13	23%

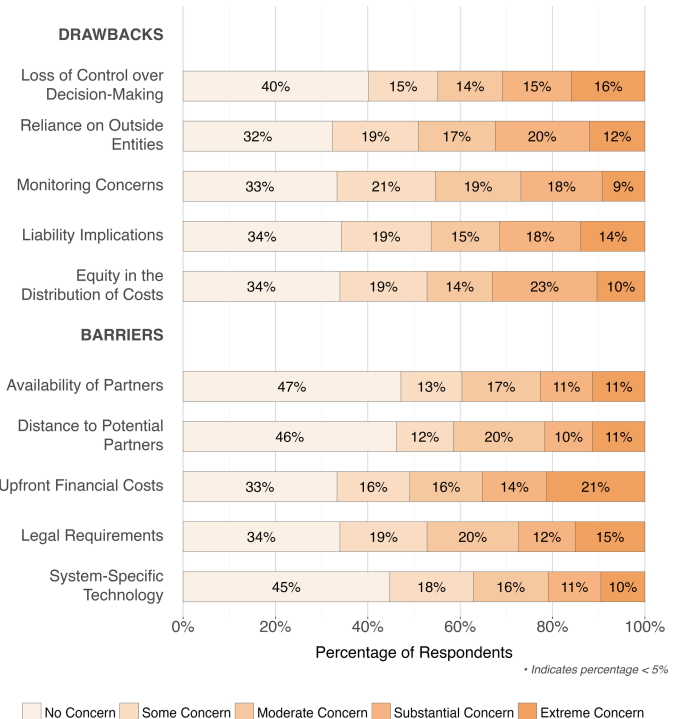
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

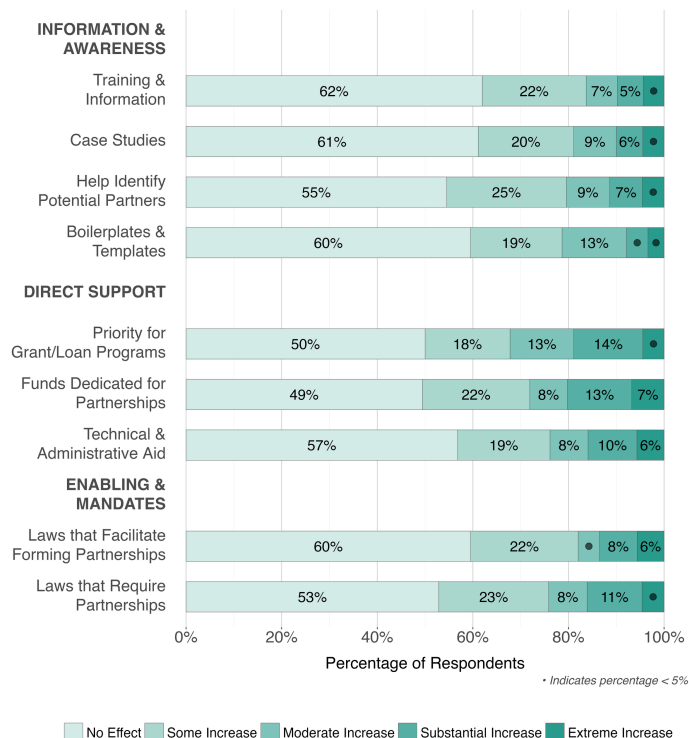


GEORGIA

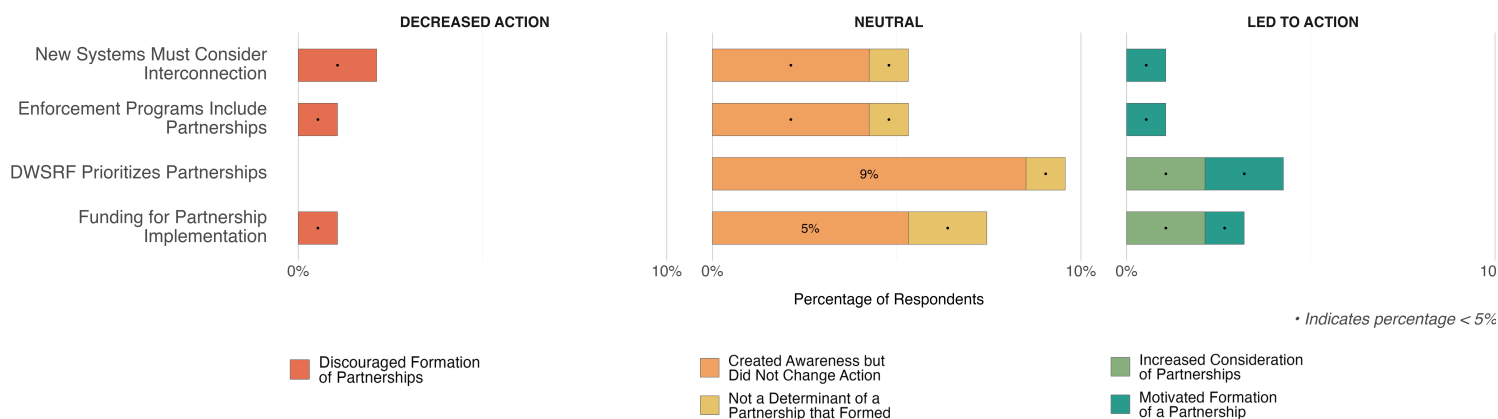
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	1%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	1%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	4%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	2%	36%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	1%	27%
Informal	0%	0%	24%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

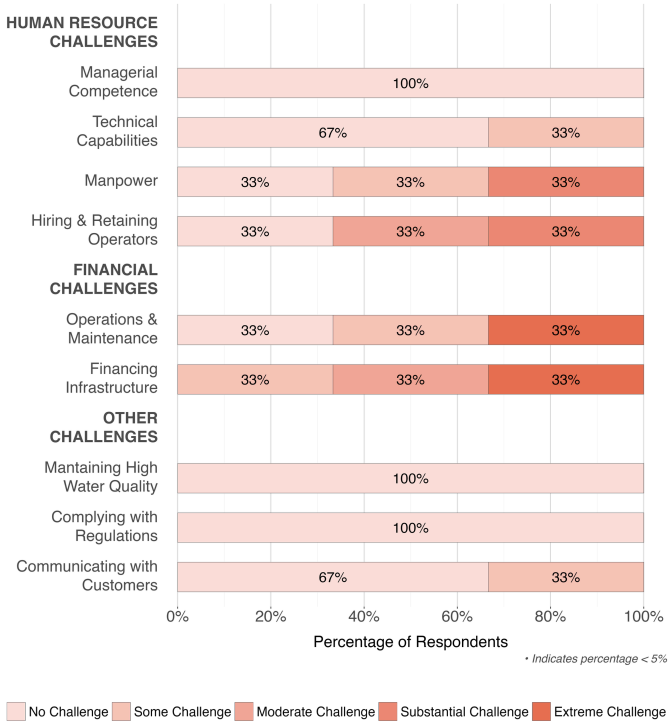


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





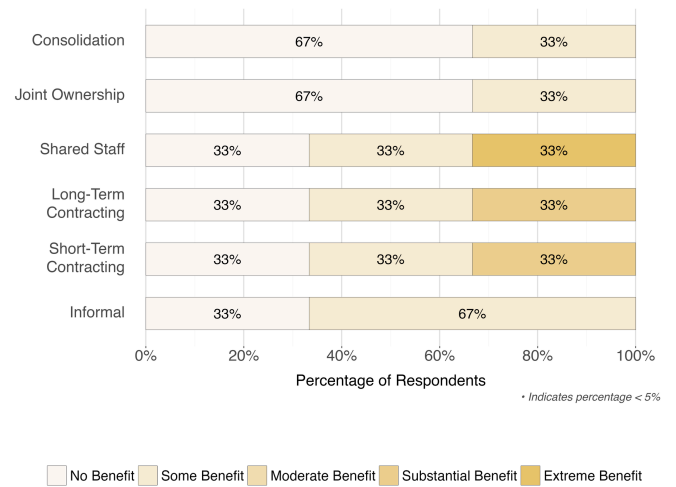
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



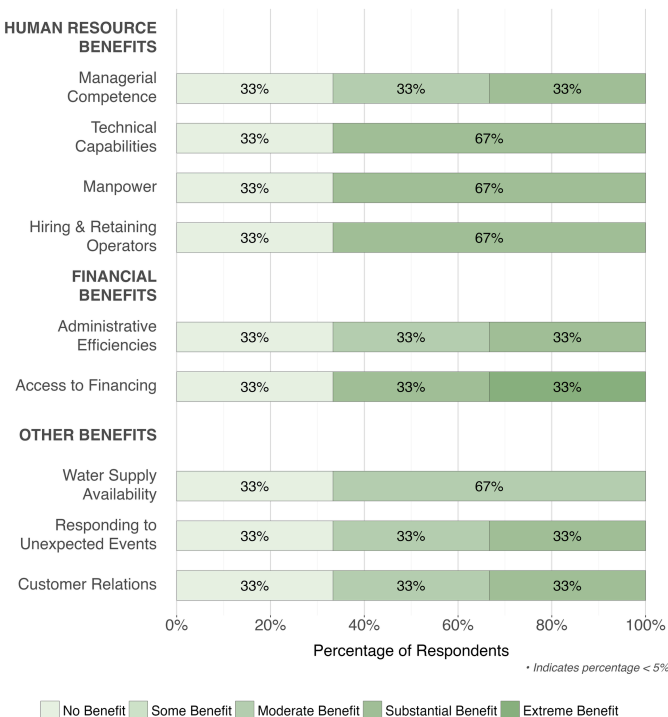
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	4	103	4%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	1	40	3%
Private	3	46	7%
Community	0		
Other	0	17	0%

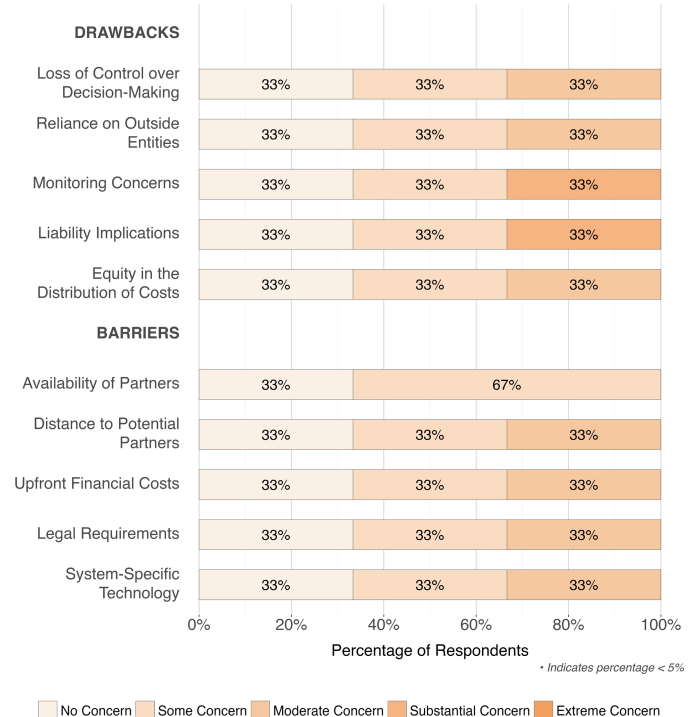
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

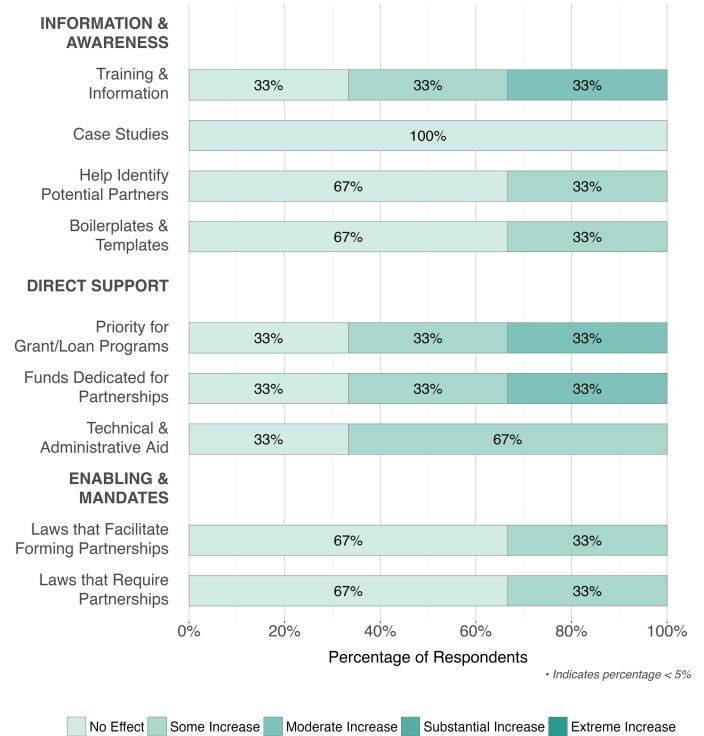




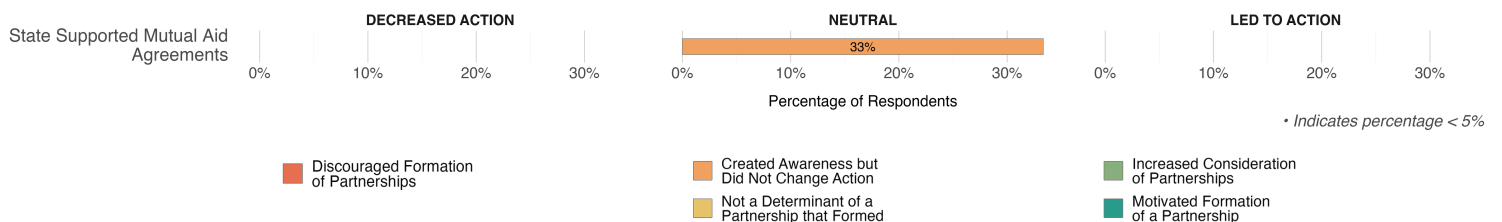
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	0%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	33%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	33%
Short-Term Contracting	0%	0%	33%
Informal	0%	0%	0%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

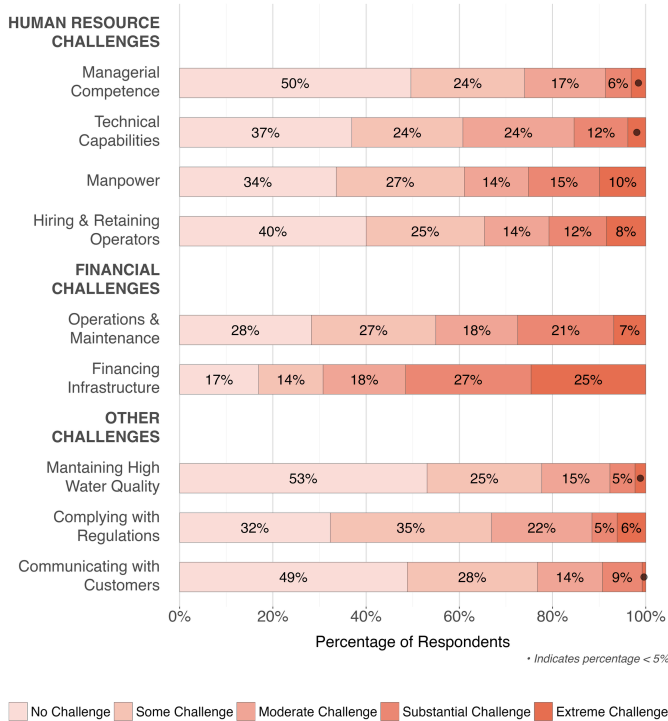


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





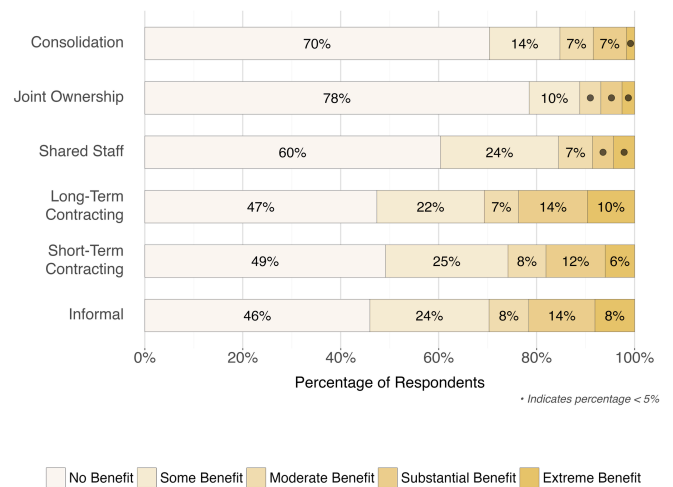
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



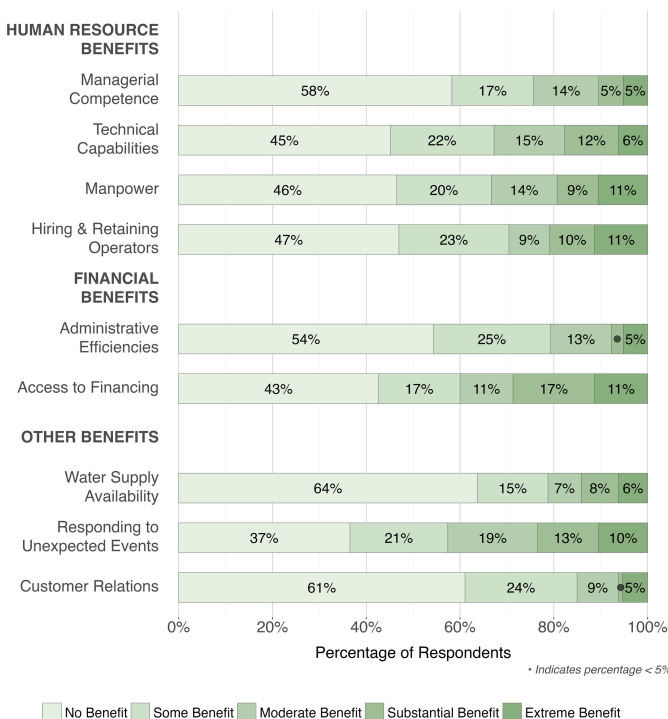
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	140	725	20%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	44	190	23%
Private	27	486	19%
Community	65		
Other	4	49	8%

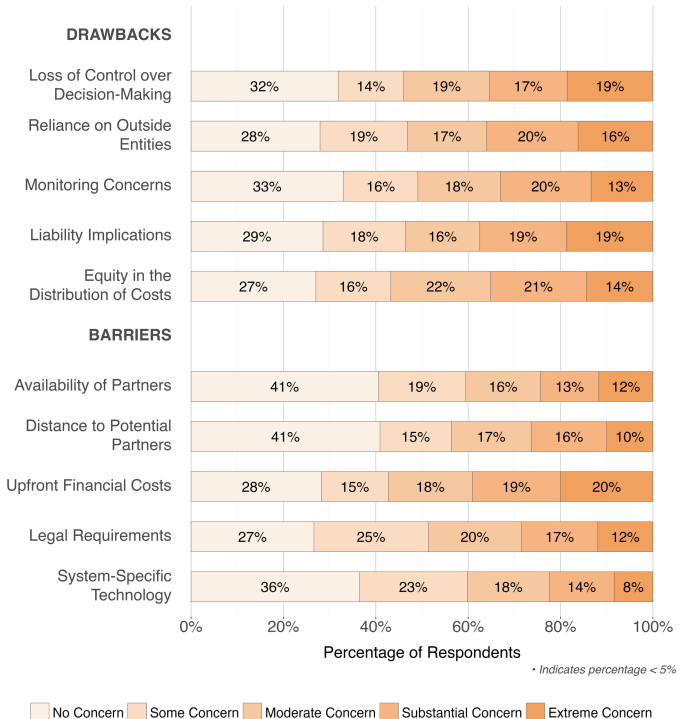
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

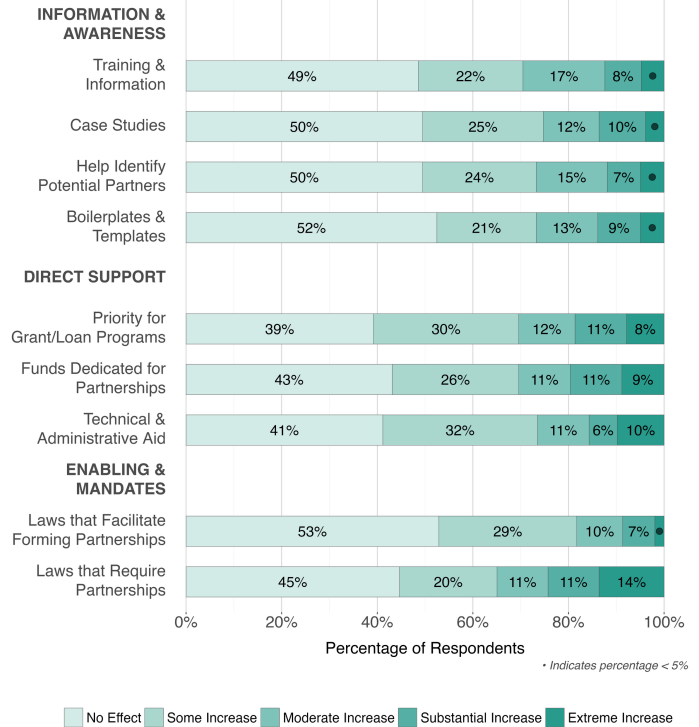




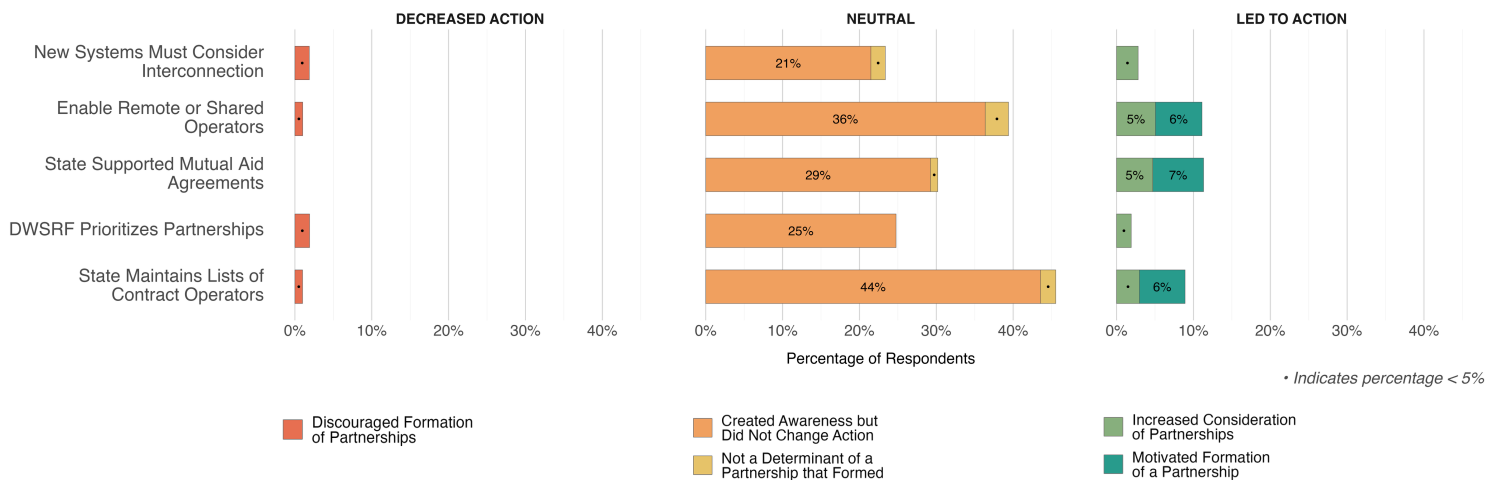
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	4%
Joint Ownership	0%	1%	3%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	6%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	0%	33%
Short-Term Contracting	8%	0%	21%
Informal	2%	1%	24%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

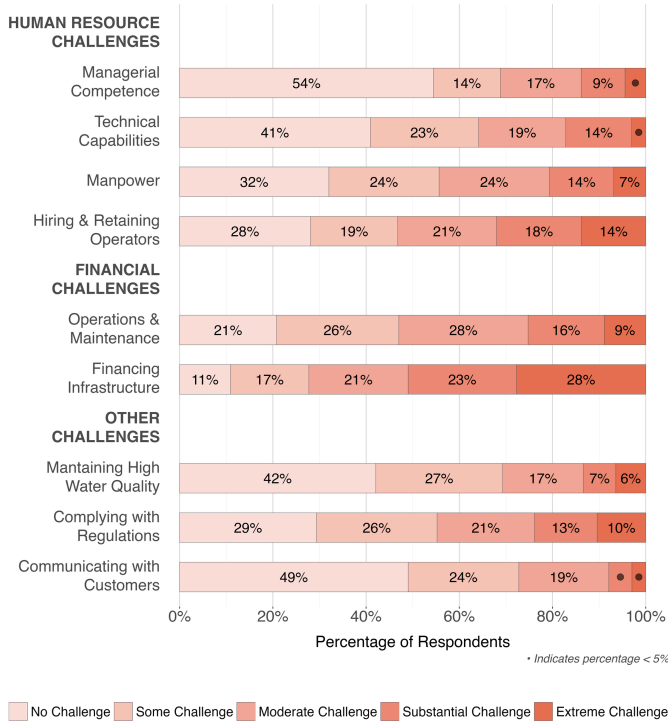


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



ILLINOIS

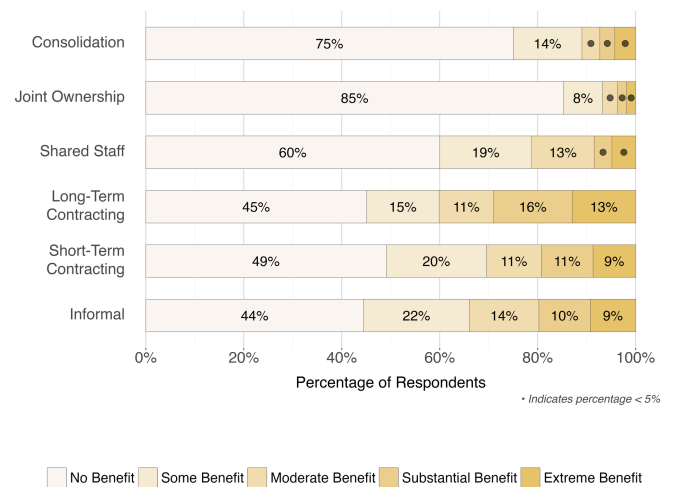
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



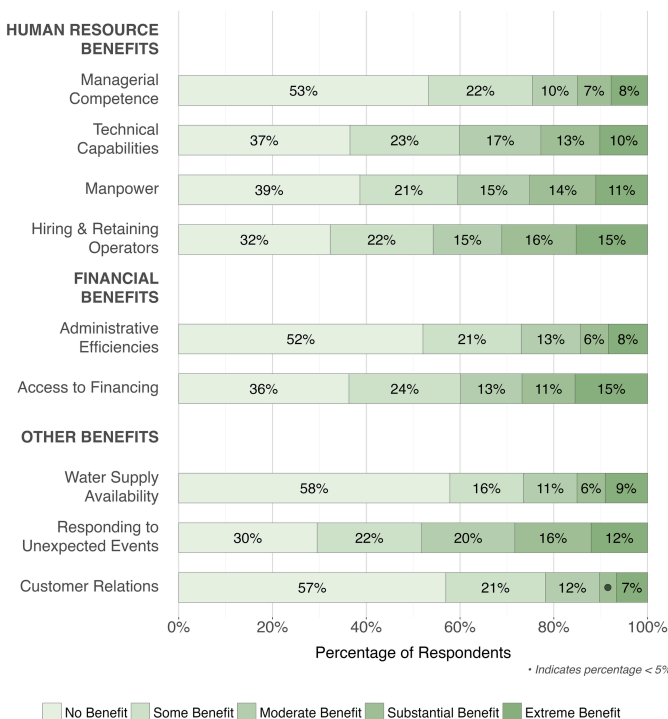
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	222	1524	15%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	158	1030	15%
Private	22	471	13%
Community	40		
Other	2	23	9%

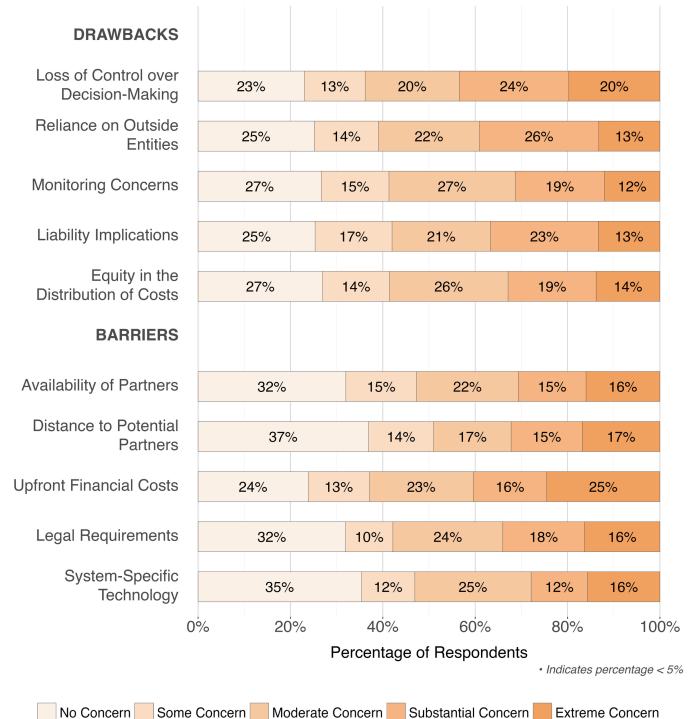
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

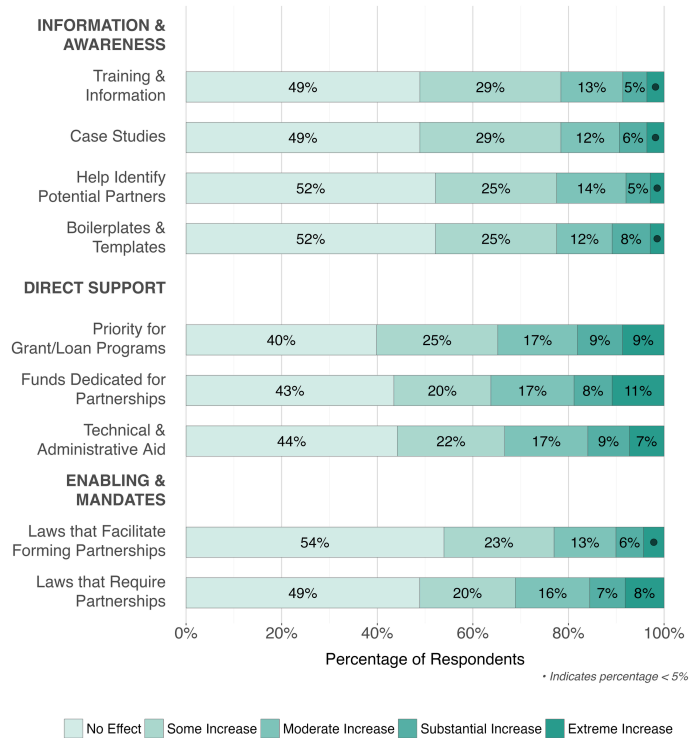


ILLINOIS

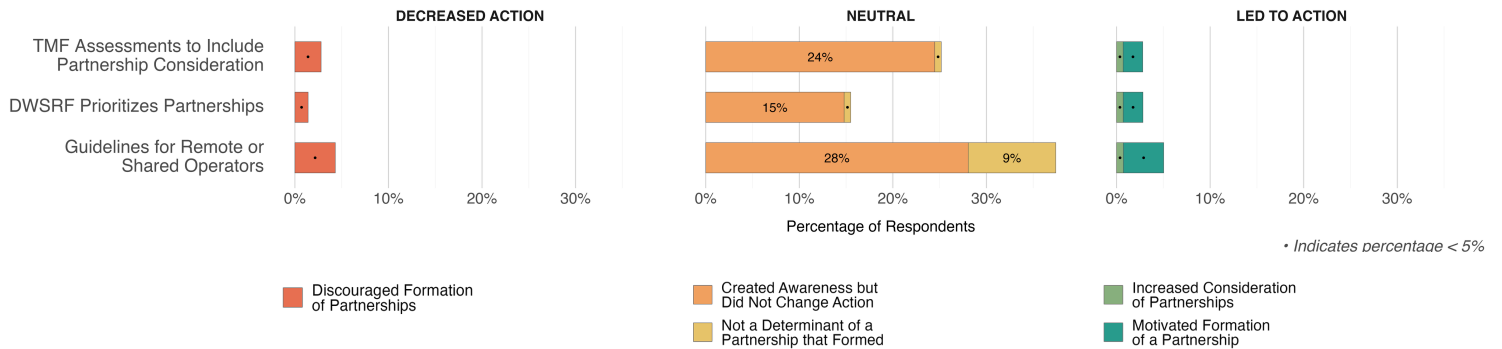
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	1%	6%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	1%	40%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	1%	29%
Informal	0%	0%	27%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

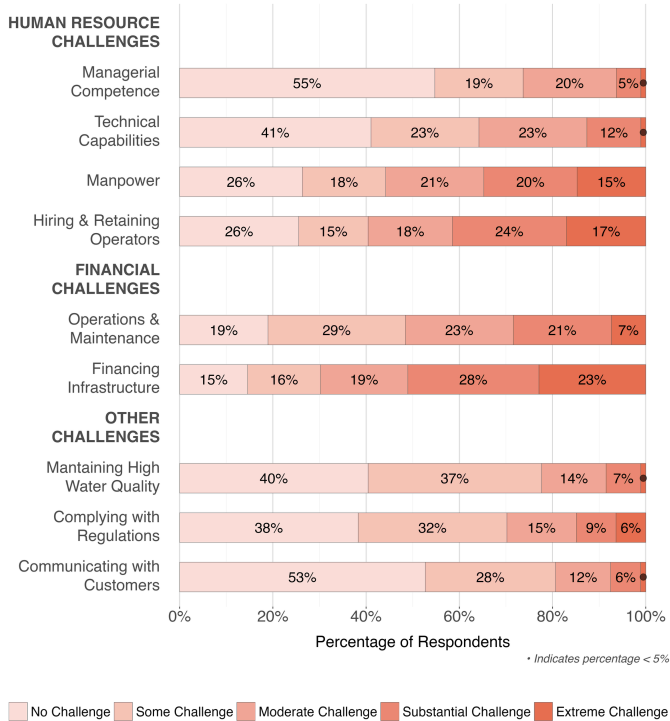


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





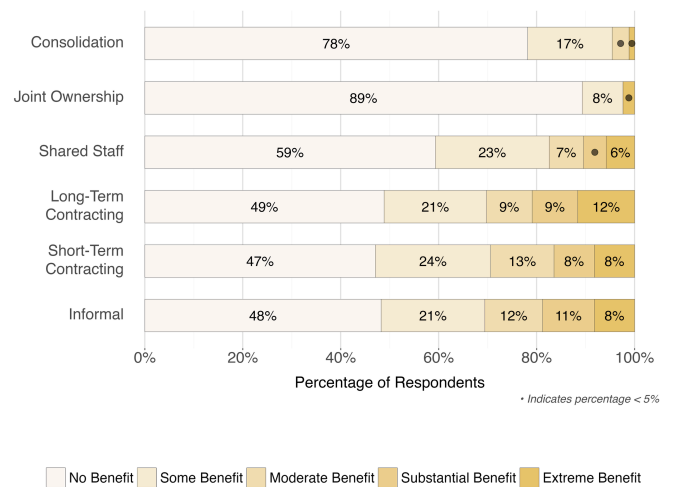
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



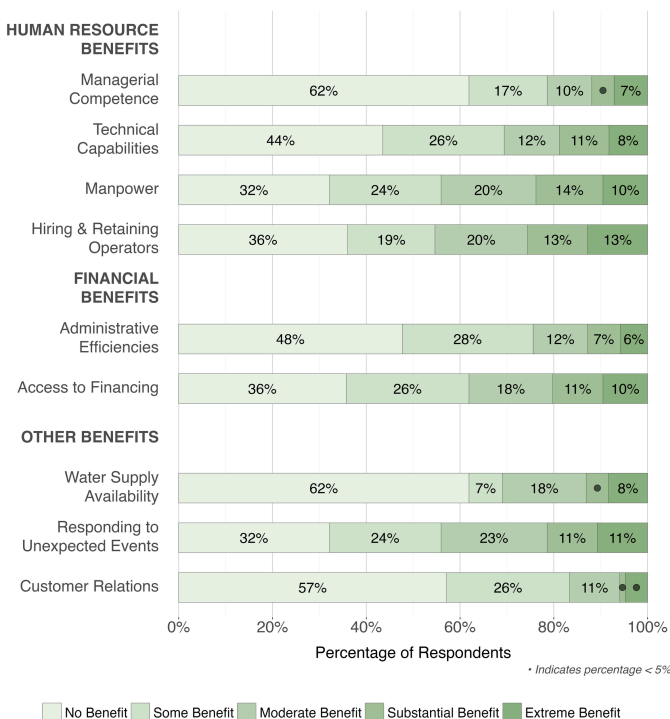
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	108	689	16%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	71	400	18%
Private	23	277	13%
Community	13		
Other	1	12	8%

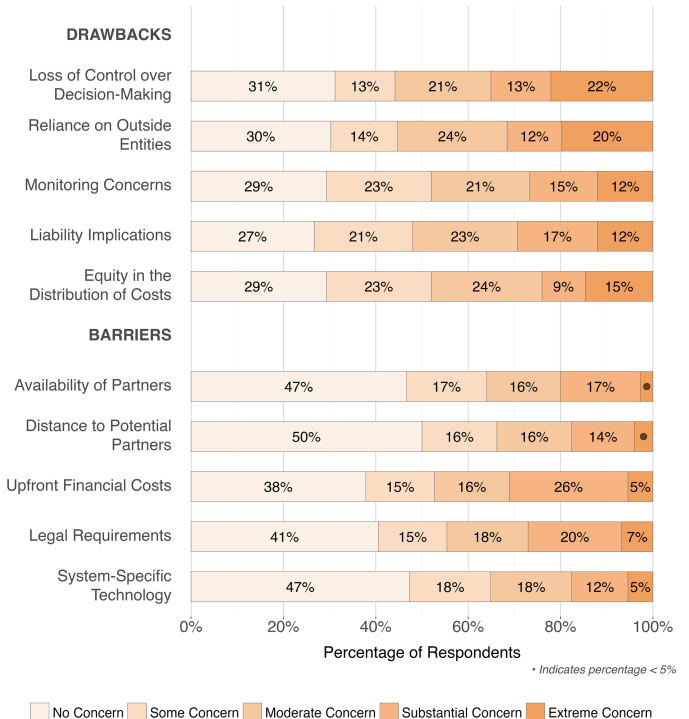
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

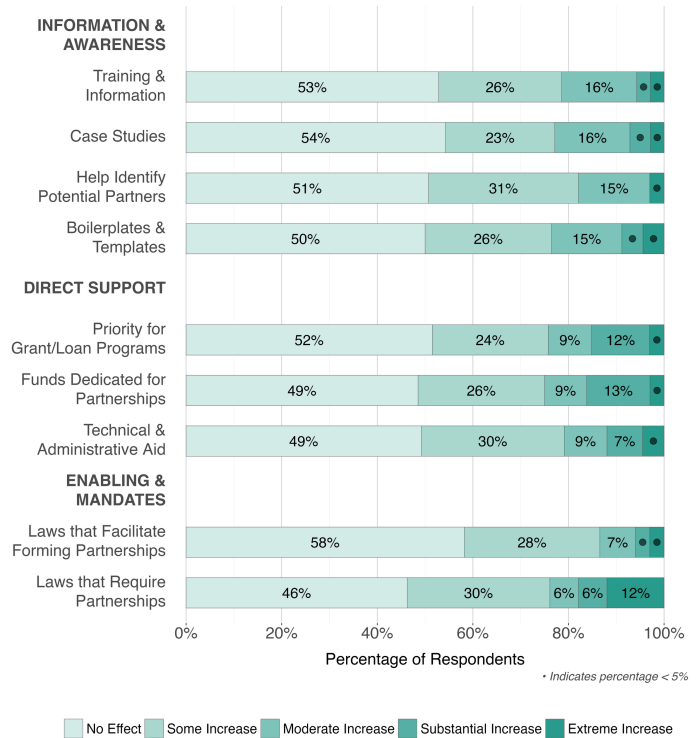




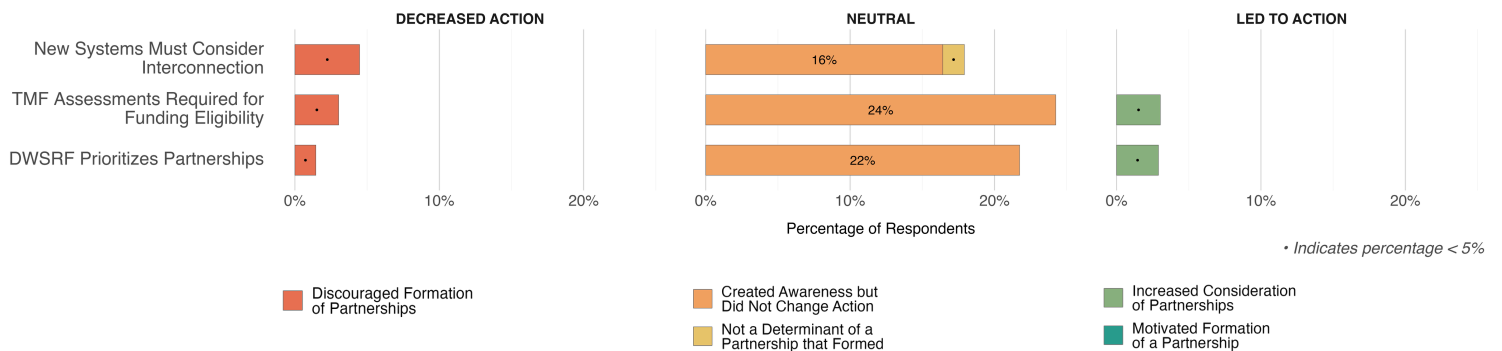
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	3%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	1%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	23%
Short-Term Contracting	8%	0%	22%
Informal	1%	0%	23%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

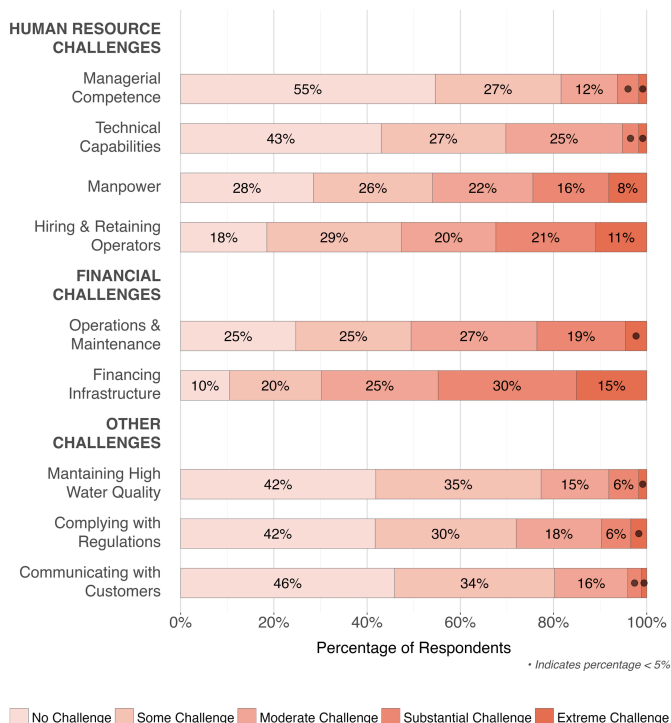


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



IOWA

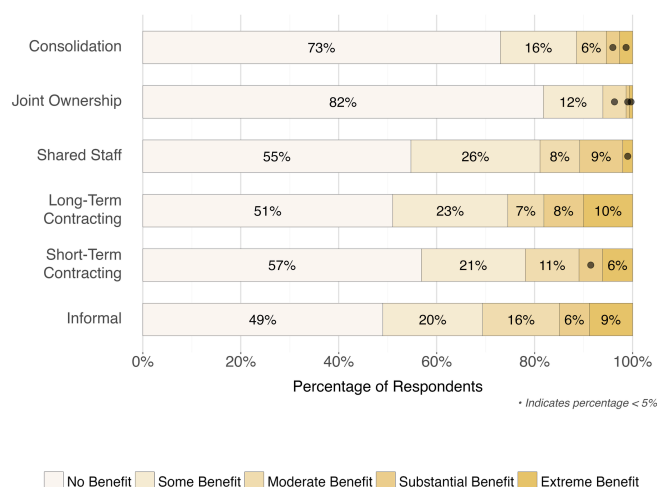
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



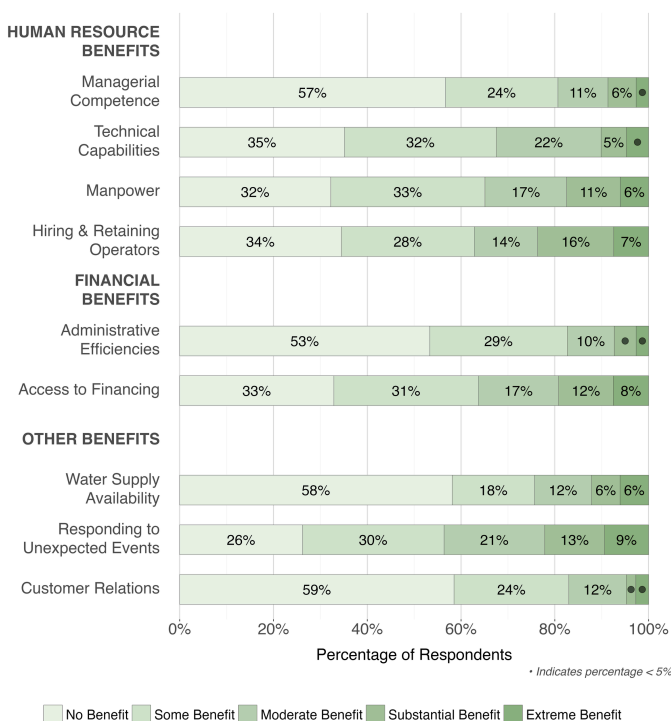
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	186	1028	18%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	138	704	20%
Private	13	316	15%
Community	33		
Other	2	8	25%

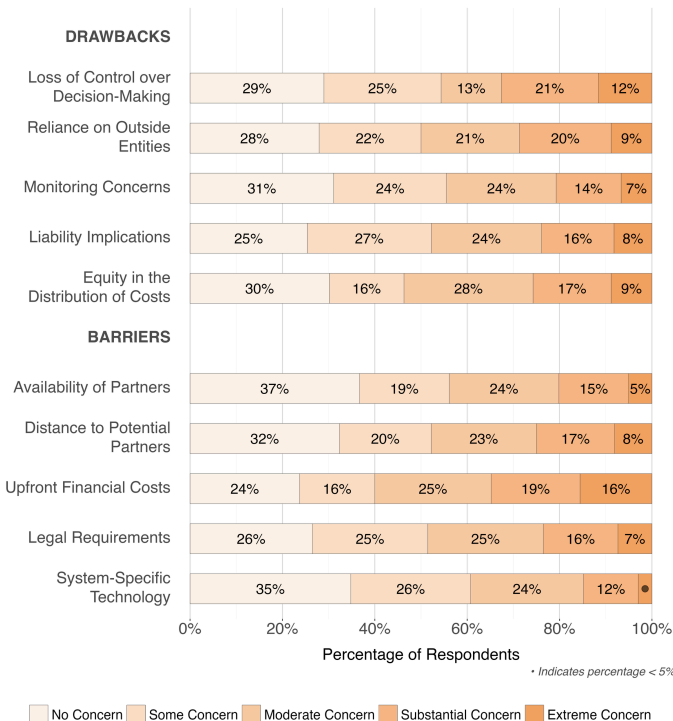
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

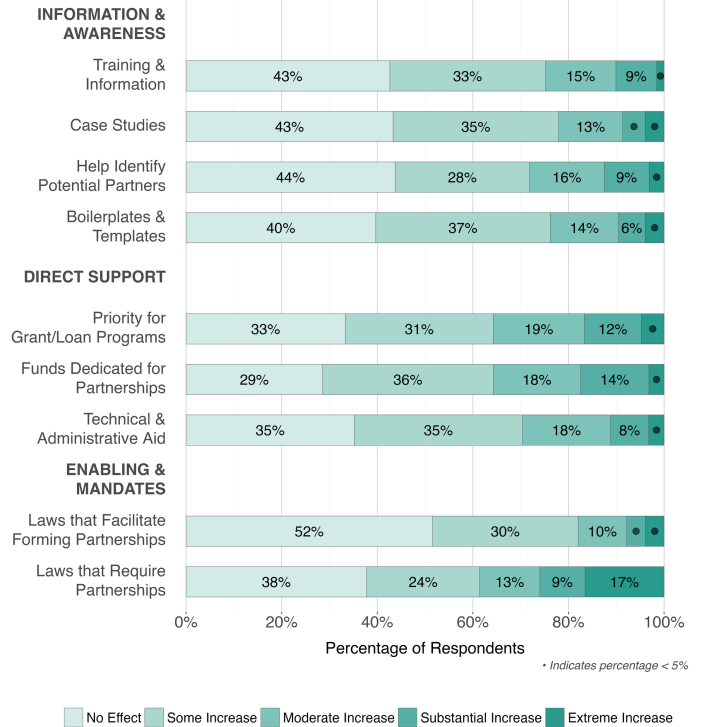


IOWA

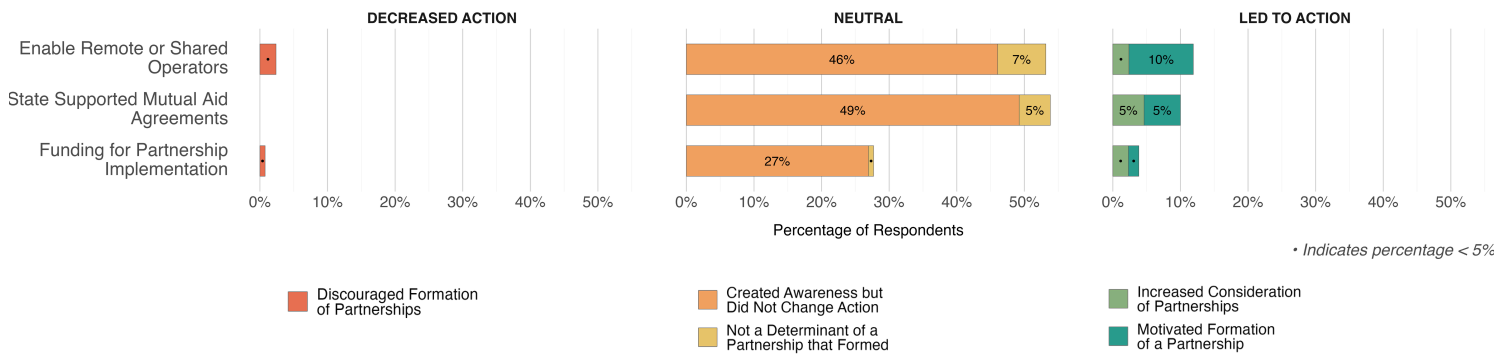
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	6%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	4%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	8%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	1%	27%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	0%	17%
Informal	1%	1%	26%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

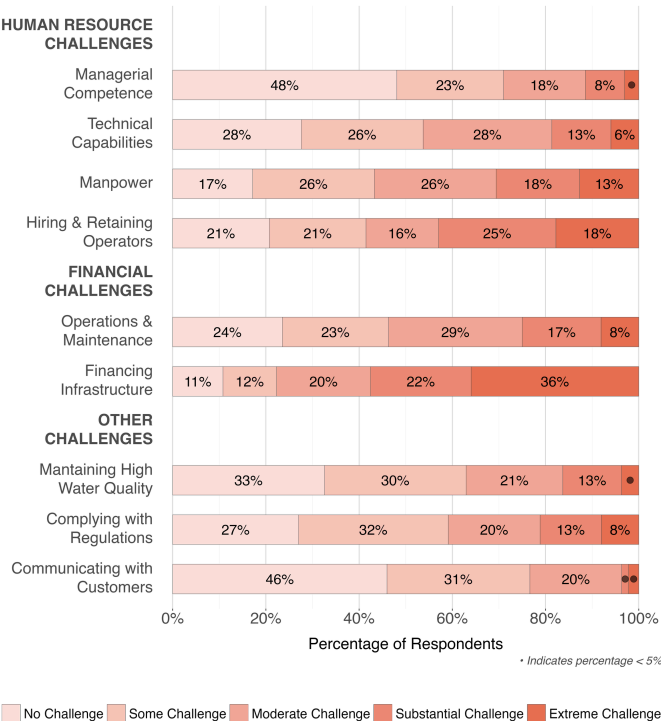


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





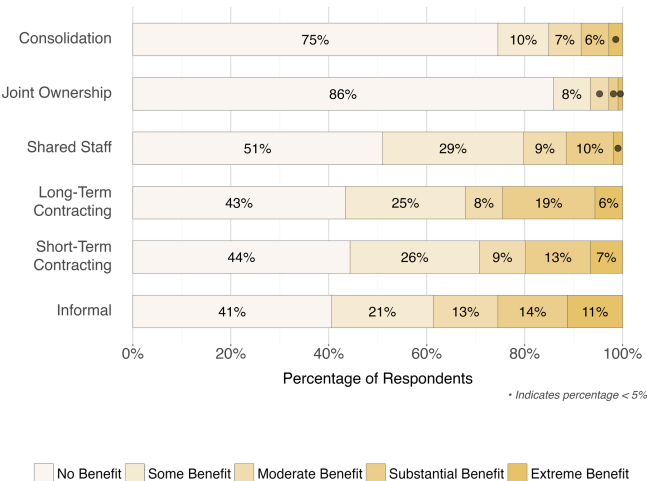
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



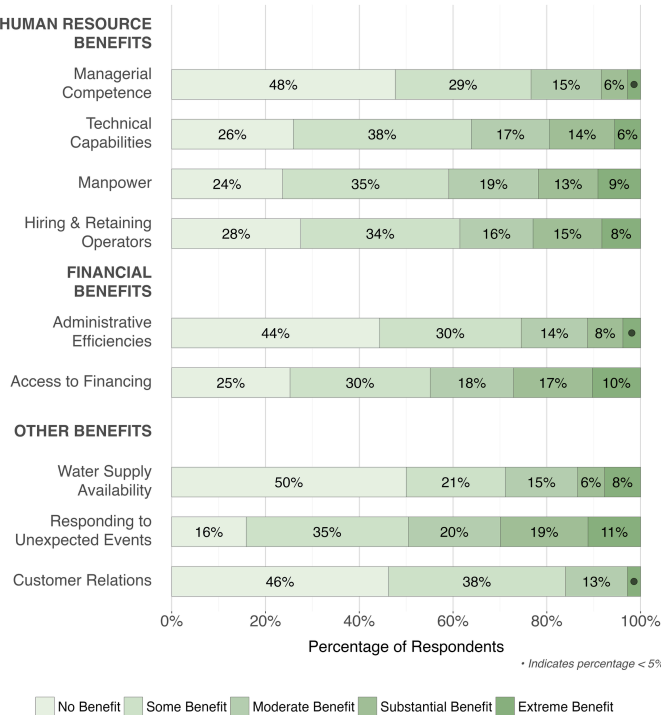
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	157	833	19%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	142	780	18%
Private	6	50	26%
Community	7		
Other	2	3	67%

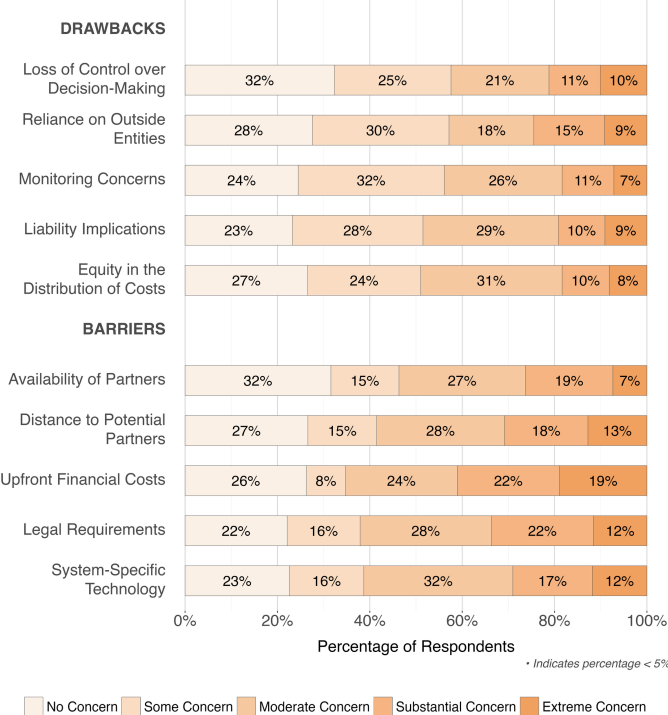
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

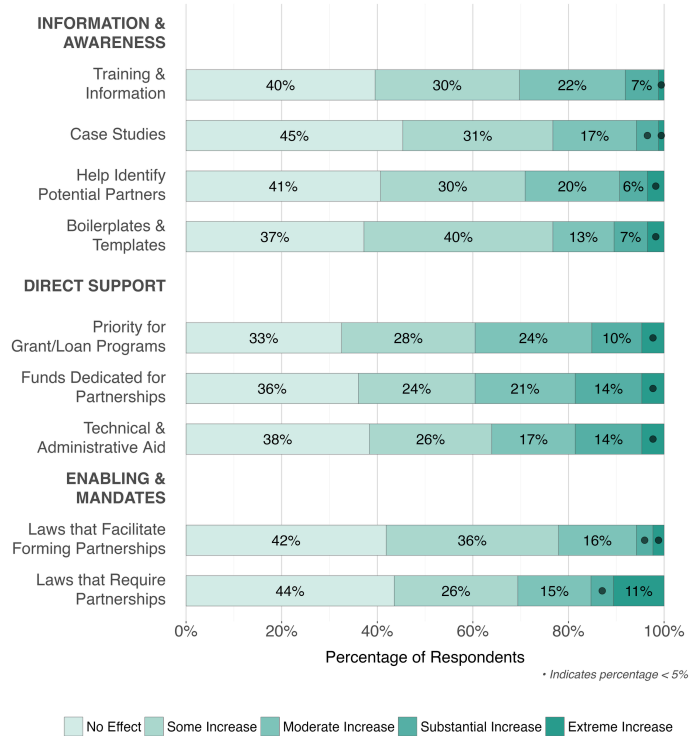


KANSAS

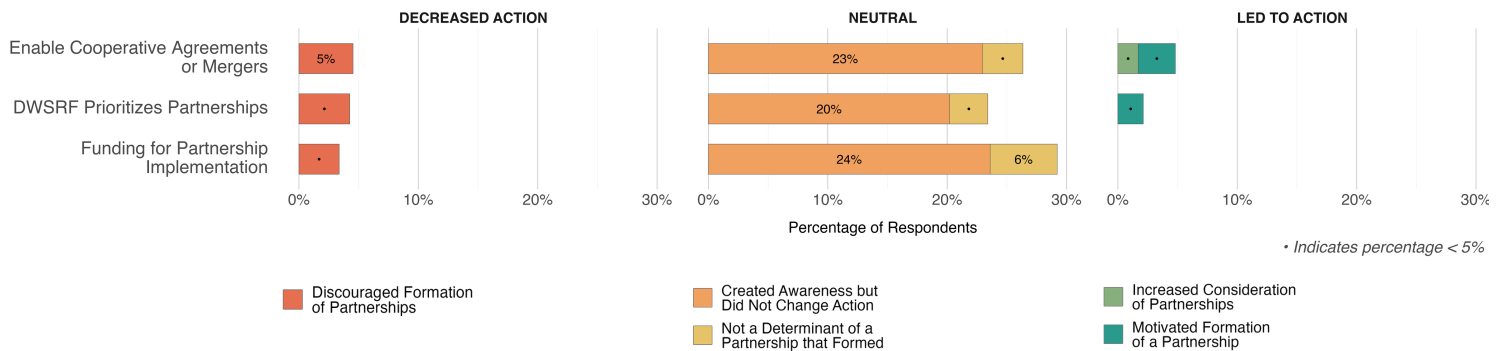
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	4%
Joint Ownership	0%	1%	3%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	8%
Long-Term Contracting	2%	1%	33%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	0%	26%
Informal	1%	0%	33%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

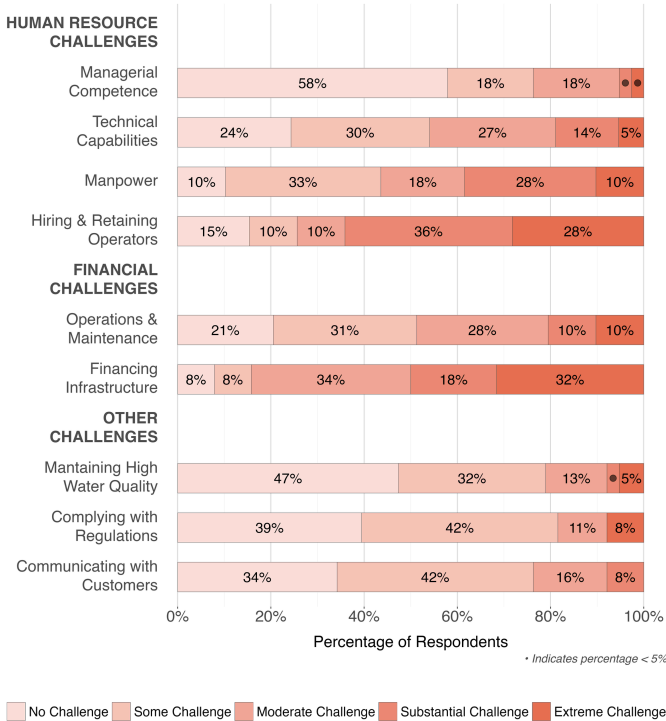


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



KENTUCKY

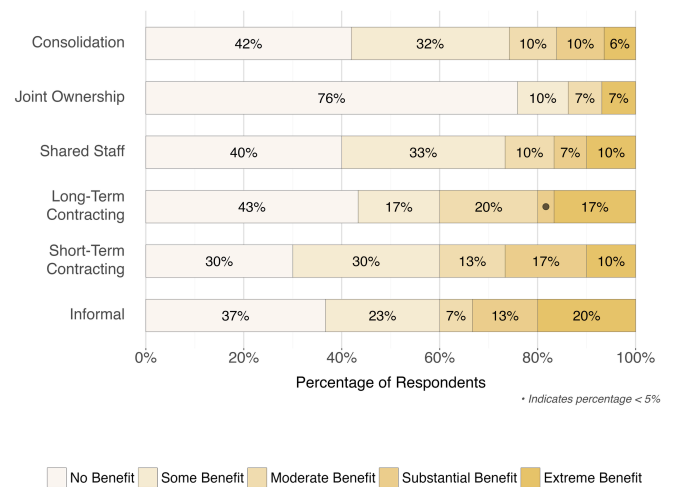
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



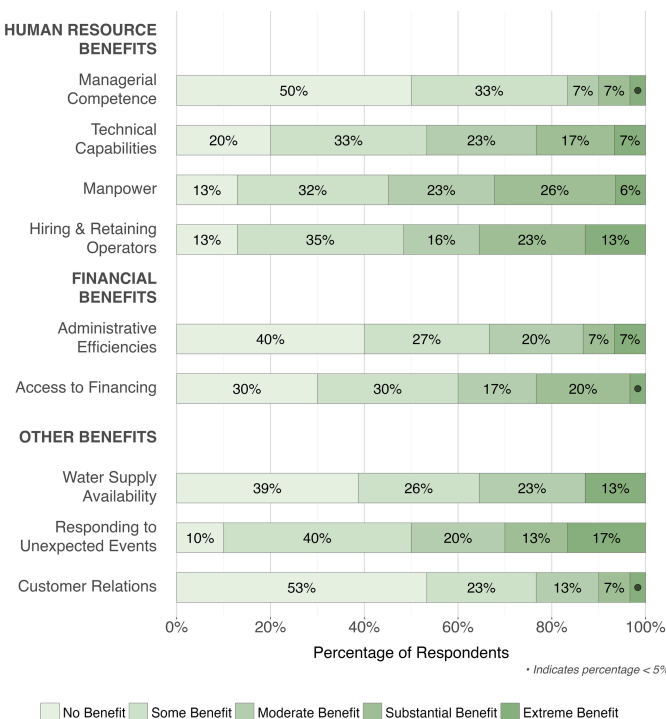
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	41	282	15%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	35	240	15%
Private	4	39	13%
Community	1		
Other	1	3	33%

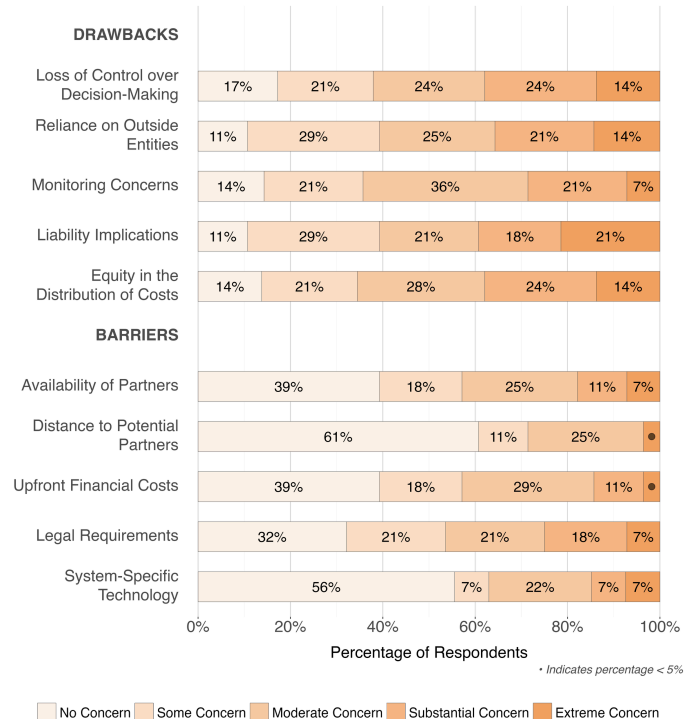
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

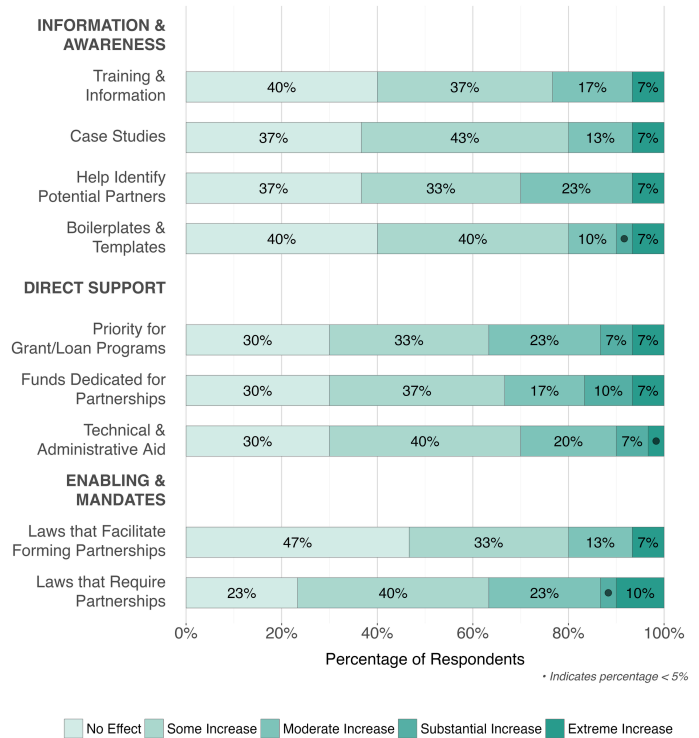


KENTUCKY

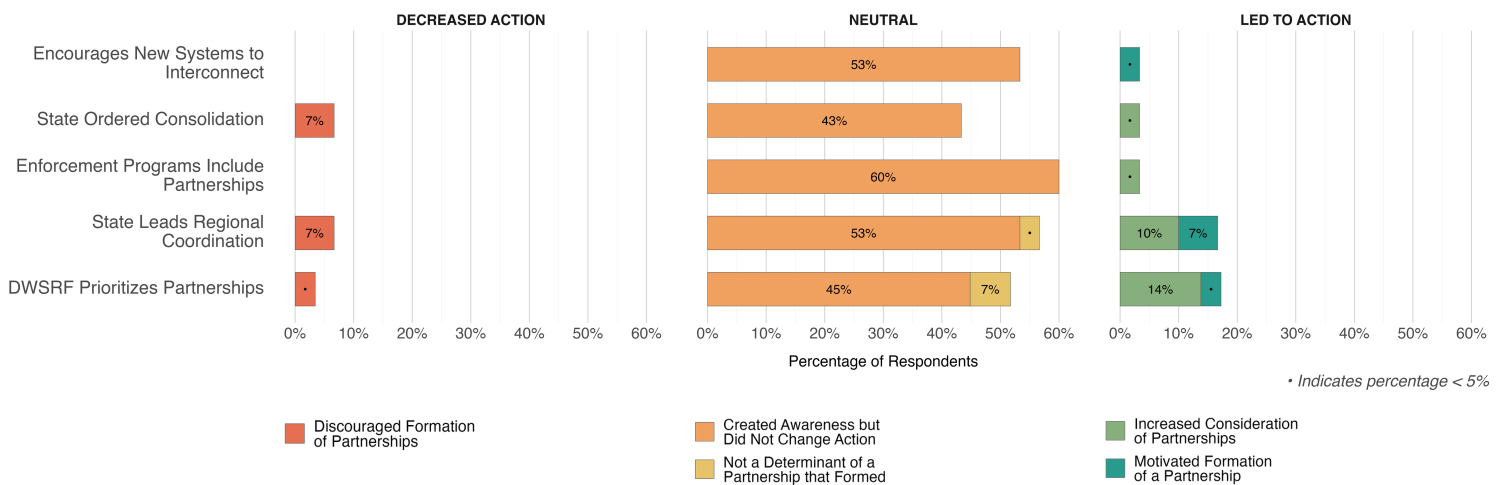
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	13%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	10%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	27%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	3%	29%
Informal	3%	0%	41%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

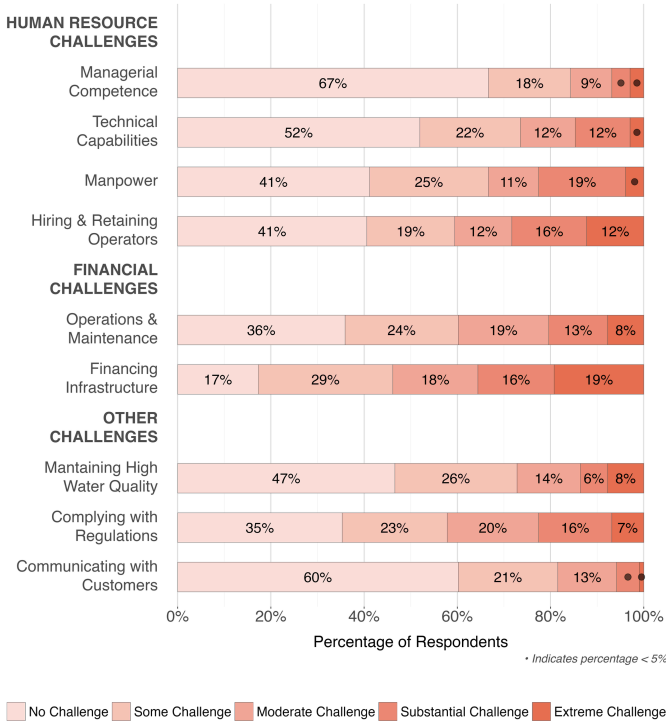


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



LOUISIANA

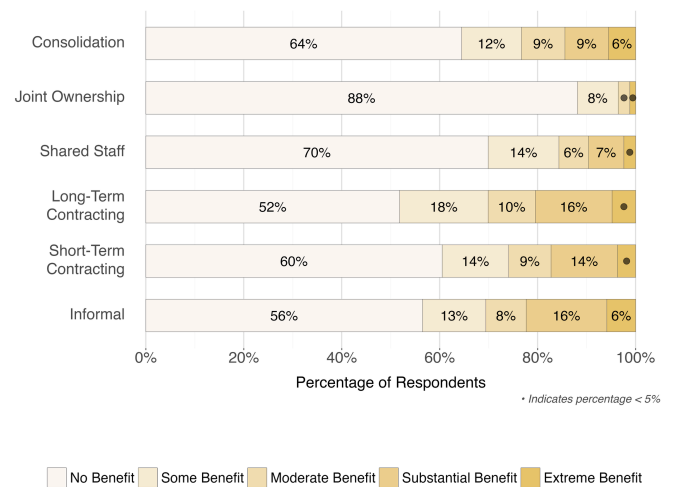
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



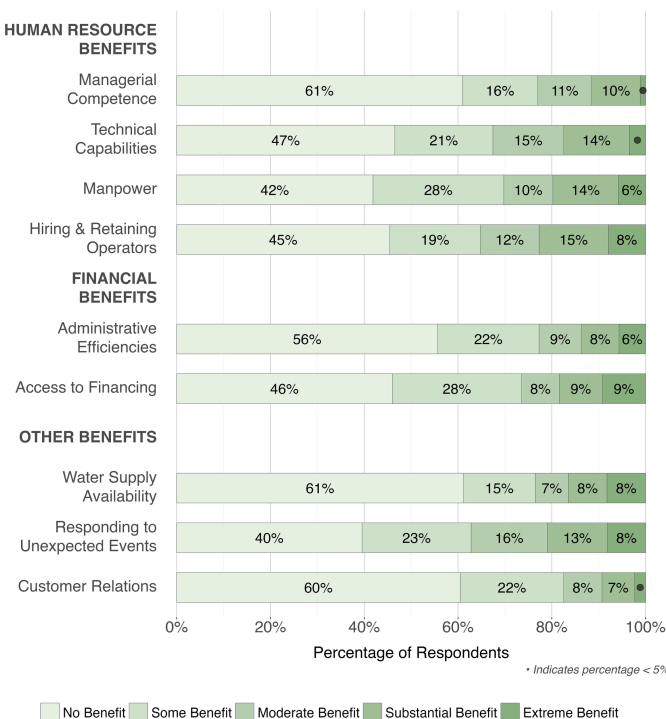
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	117	880	13%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	57	374	15%
Private	32	490	12%
Community	26		
Other	2	16	13%

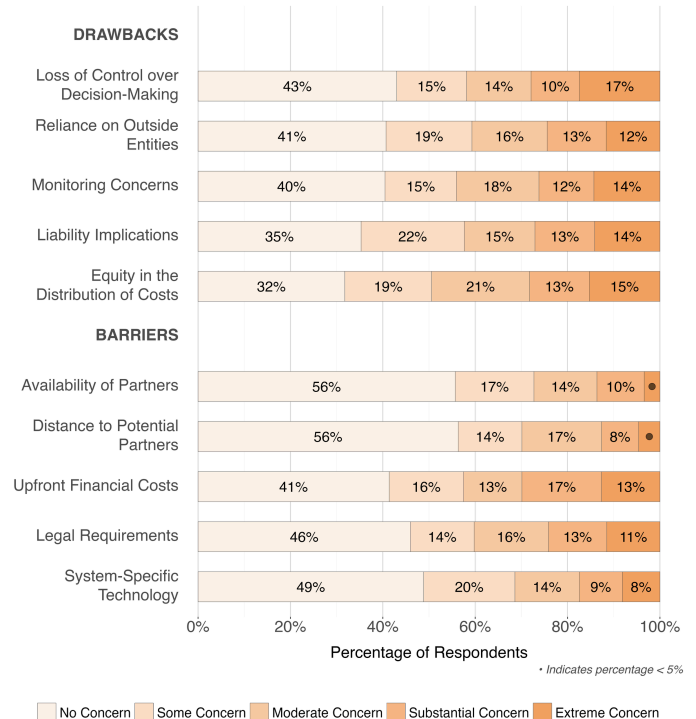
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

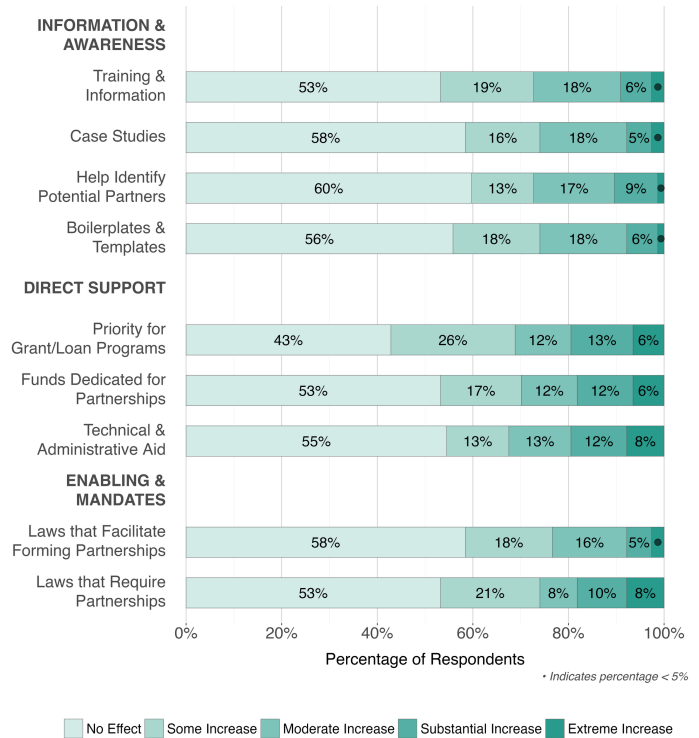


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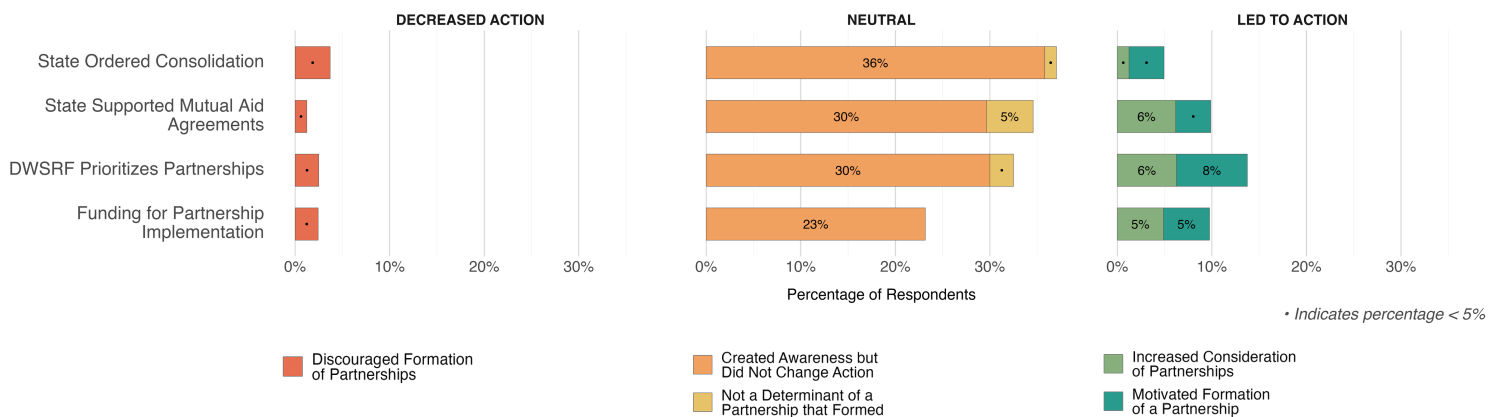
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	3%	1%	9%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	1%
Shared Staff	0%	1%	6%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	3%	26%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	3%	23%
Informal	2%	0%	15%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

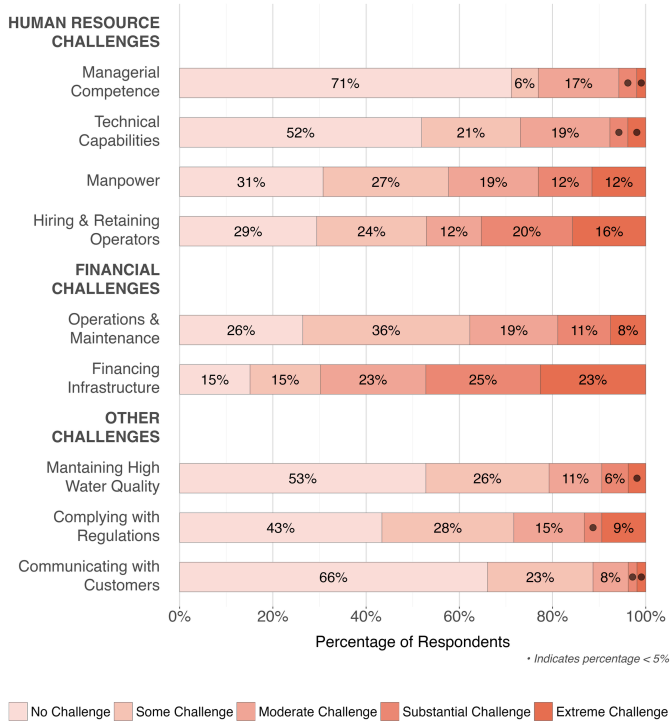


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





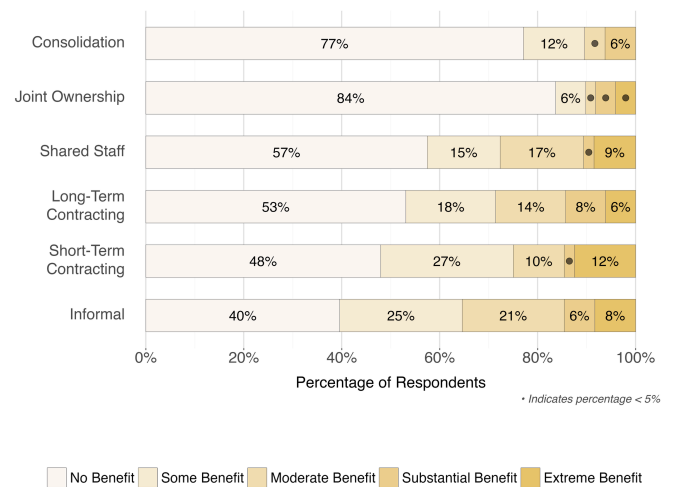
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



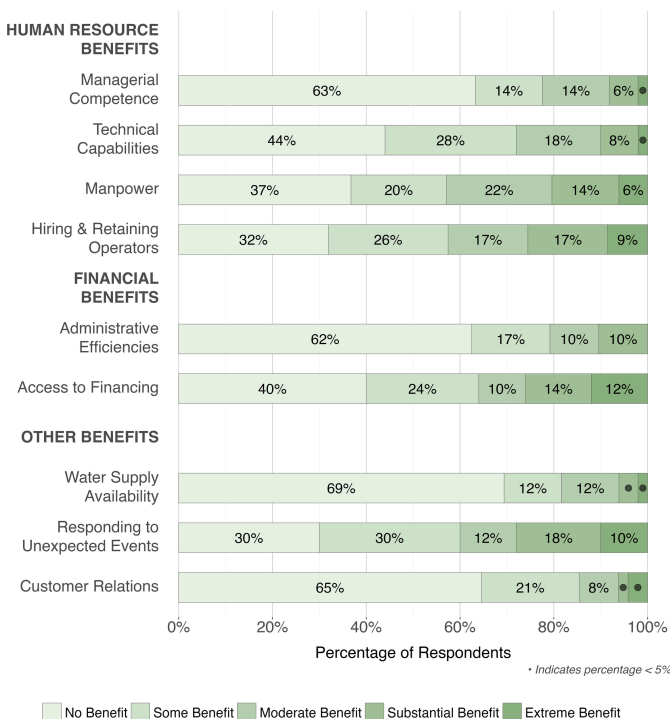
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	56	373	15%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	24	126	19%
Private	18	242	12%
Community	12		
Other	2	5	40%

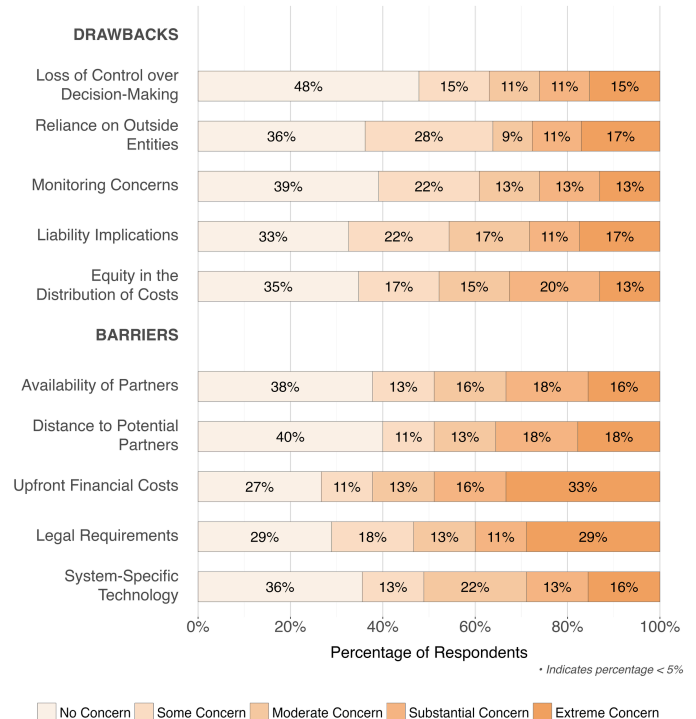
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

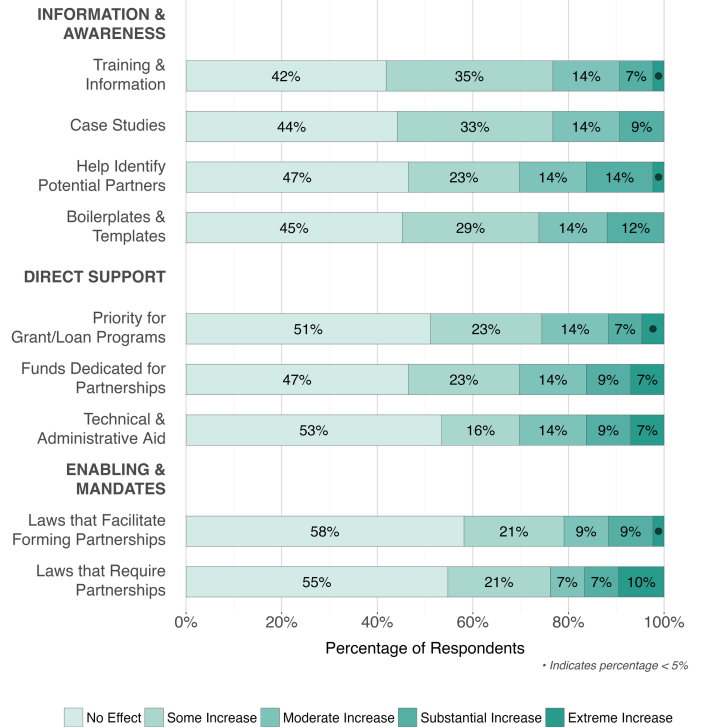




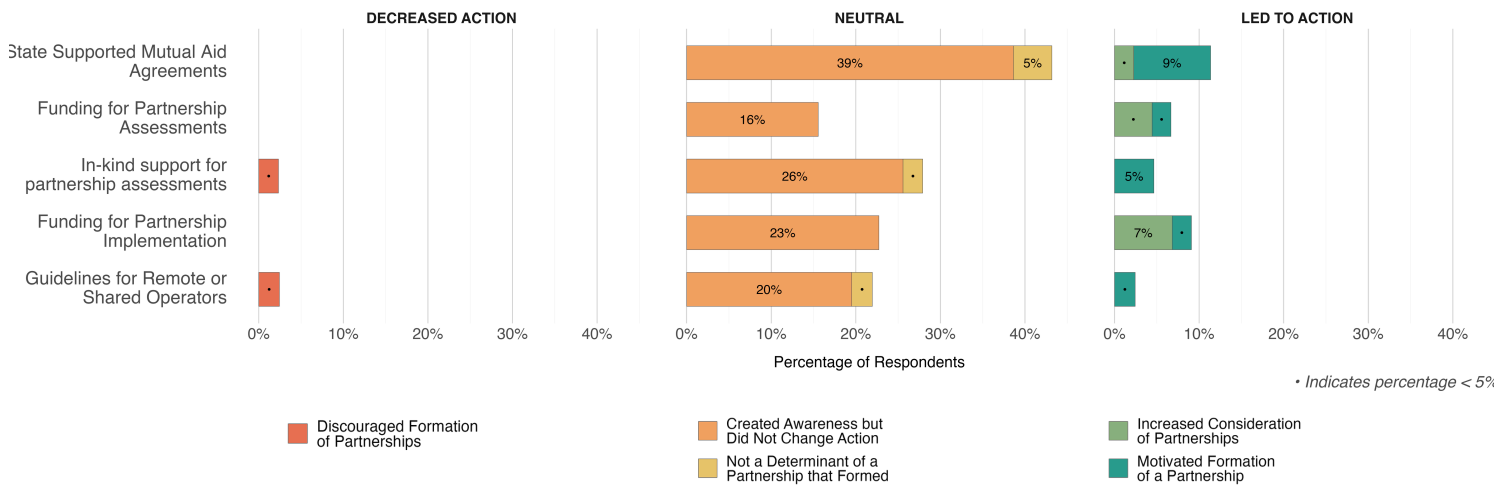
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	8%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	2%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	16%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	22%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	2%	20%
Informal	2%	0%	27%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

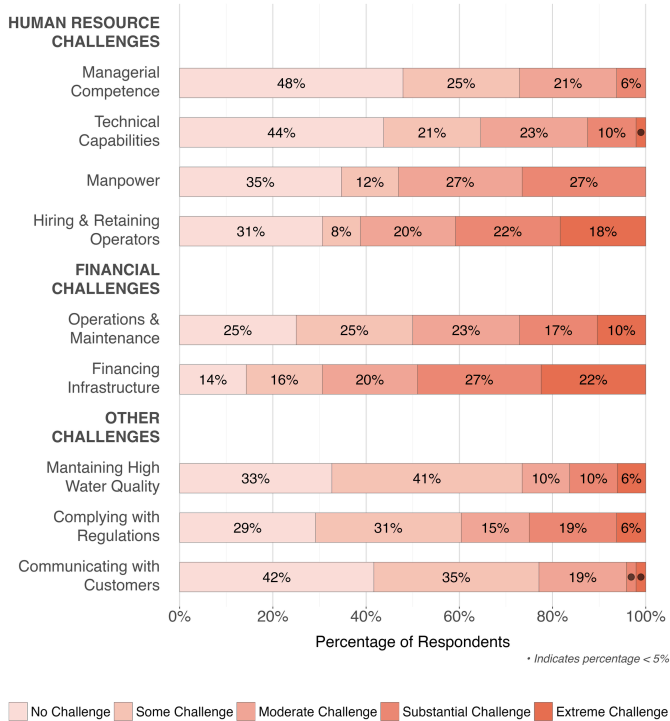


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





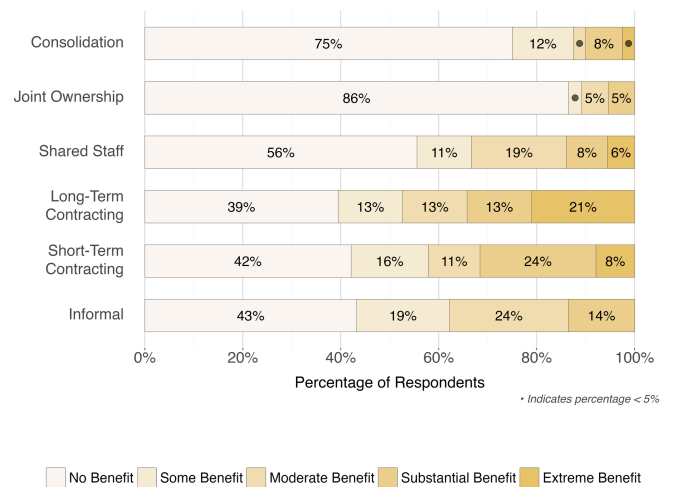
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



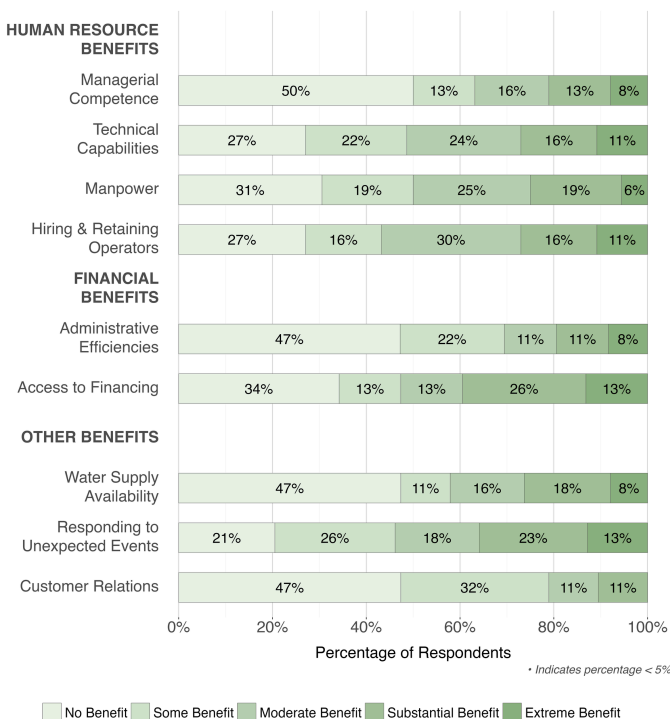
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	54	438	12%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	20	180	11%
Private	23	242	14%
Community	10		
Other	1	16	6%

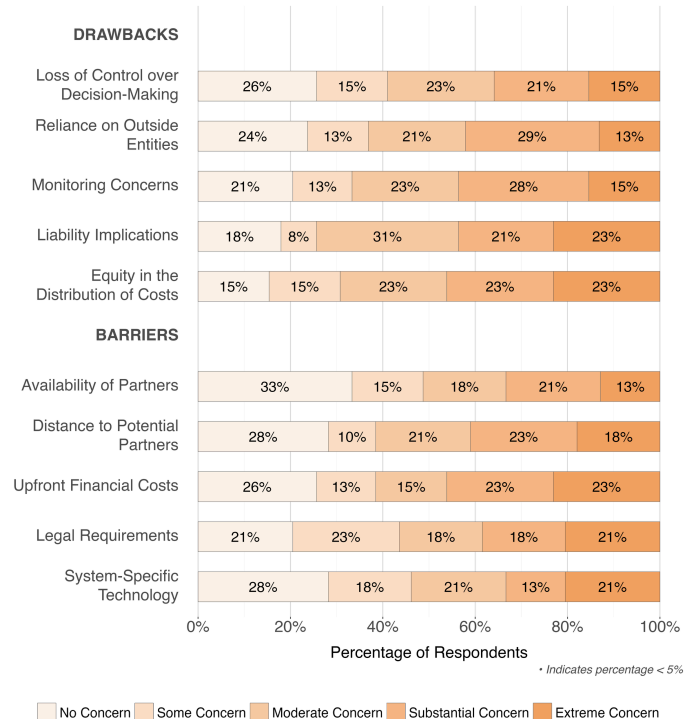
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

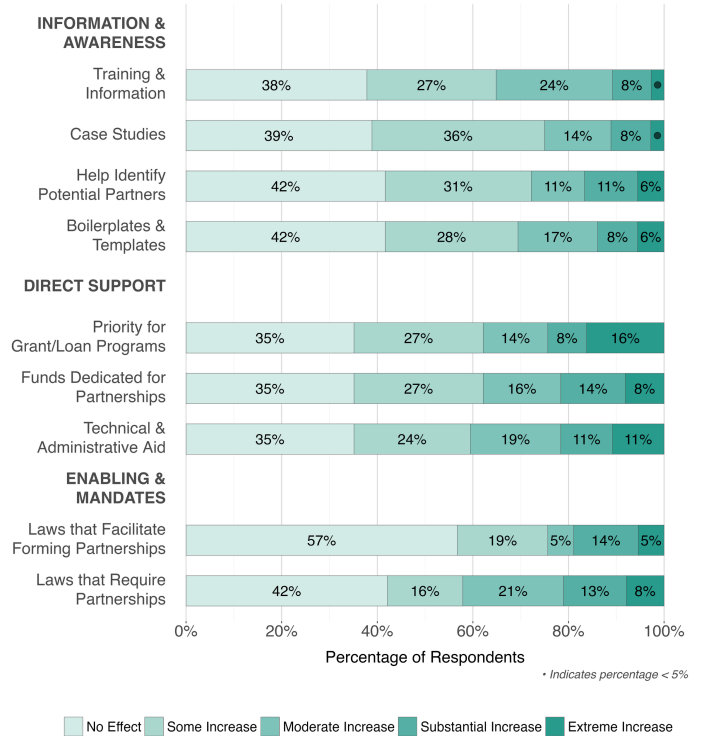




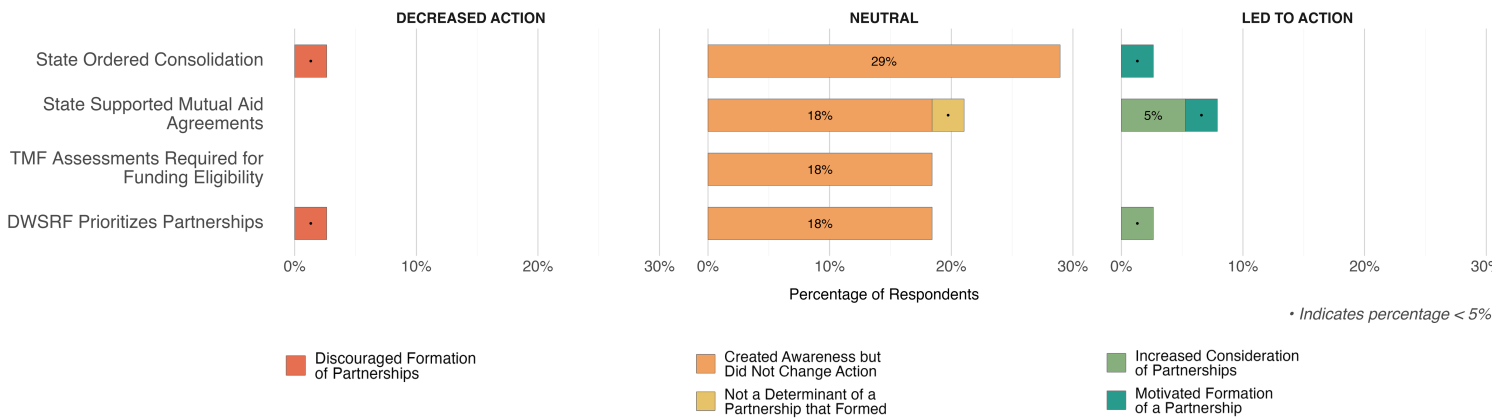
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	9%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	7%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	14%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	44%
Short-Term Contracting	5%	0%	28%
Informal	0%	2%	35%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

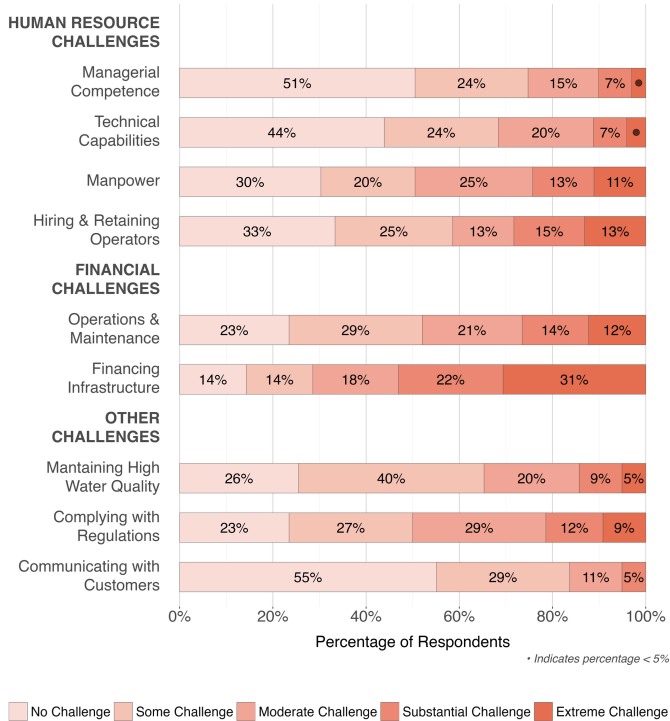


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



MASSACHUSETTS

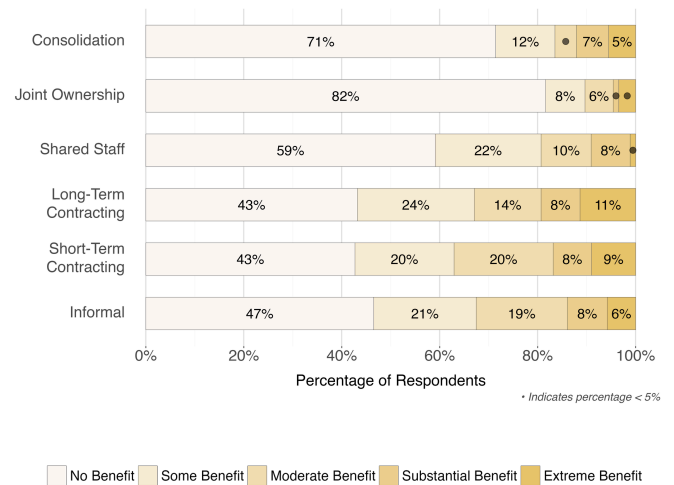
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



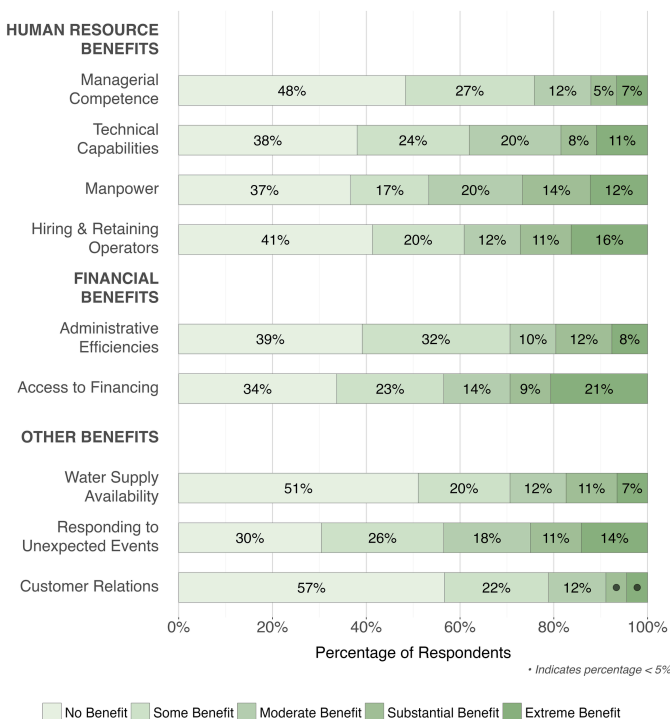
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	110	365	30%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	59	150	39%
Private	19	196	25%
Community	30		
Other	2	19	11%

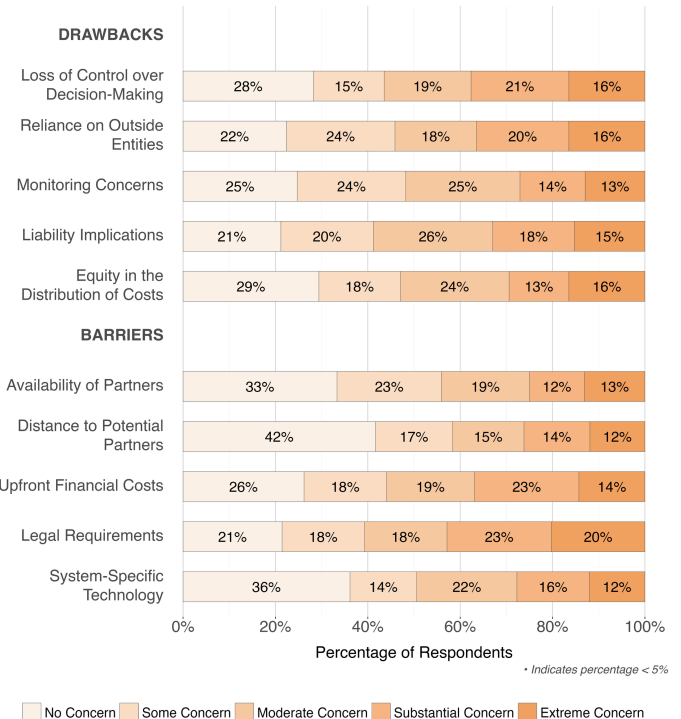
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

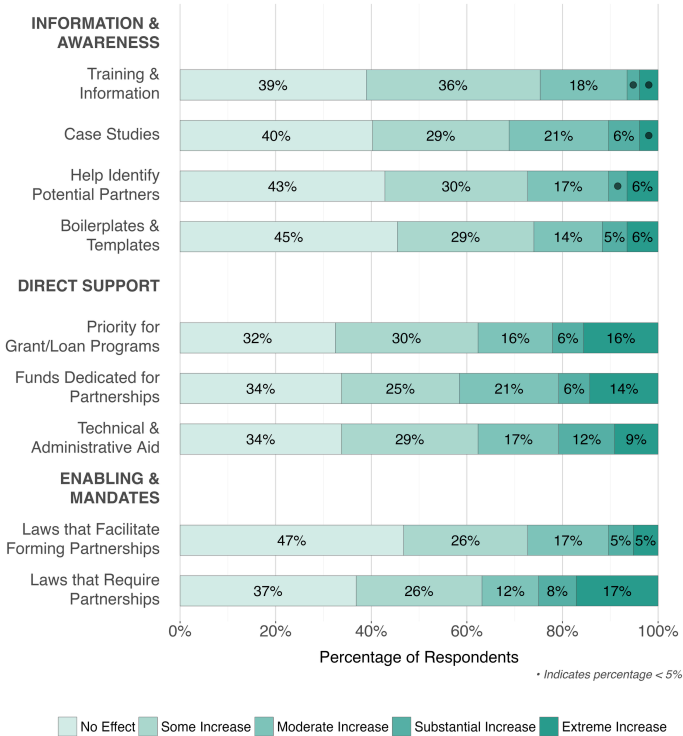


MASSACHUSETTS

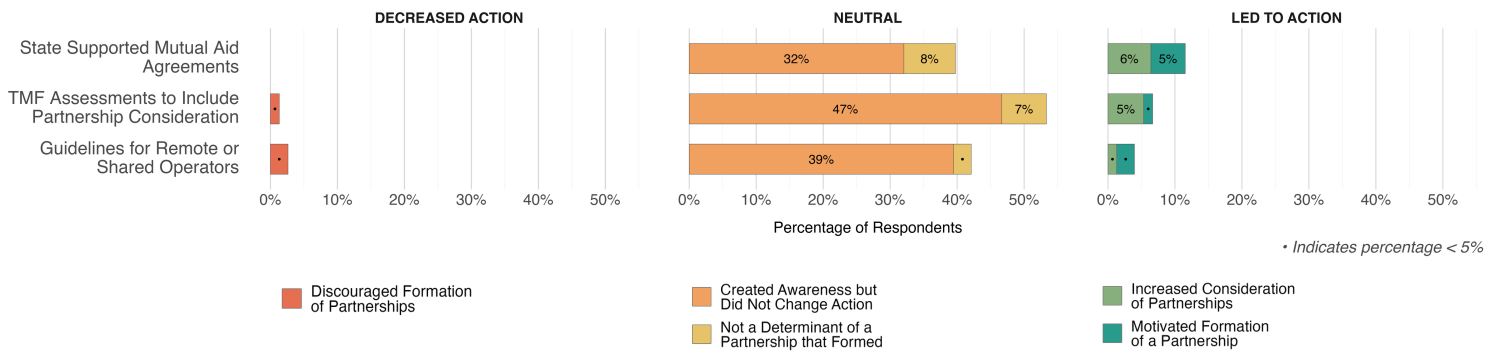
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	1%	1%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	3%
Long-Term Contracting	2%	0%	31%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	1%	29%
Informal	4%	0%	33%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

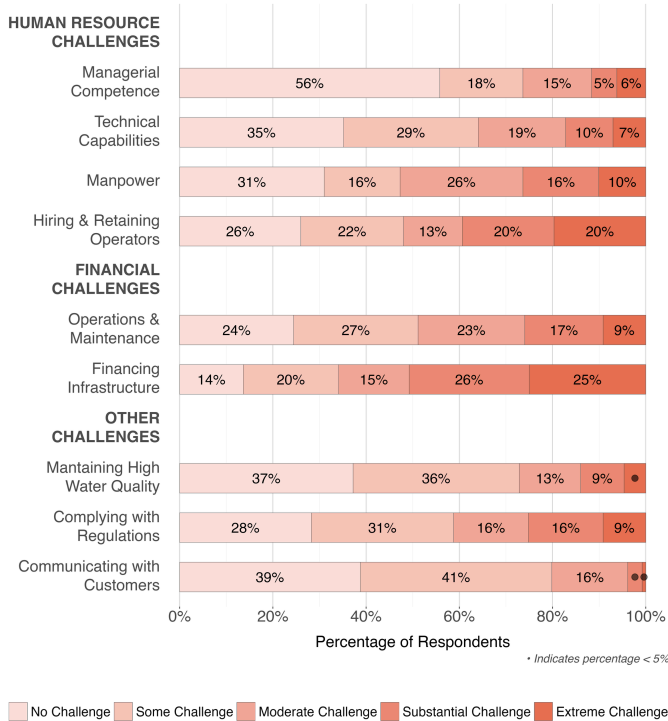


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





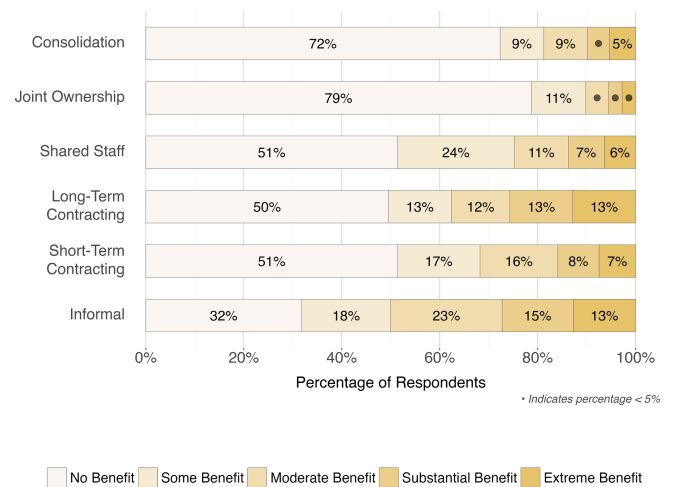
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



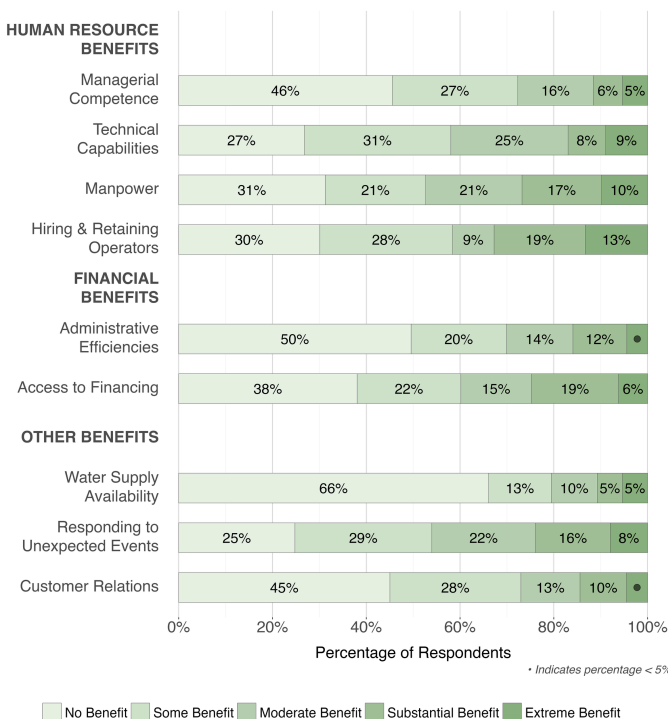
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	138	1239	11%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	100	588	17%
Private	24	643	6%
Community	13		
Other	1	8	13%

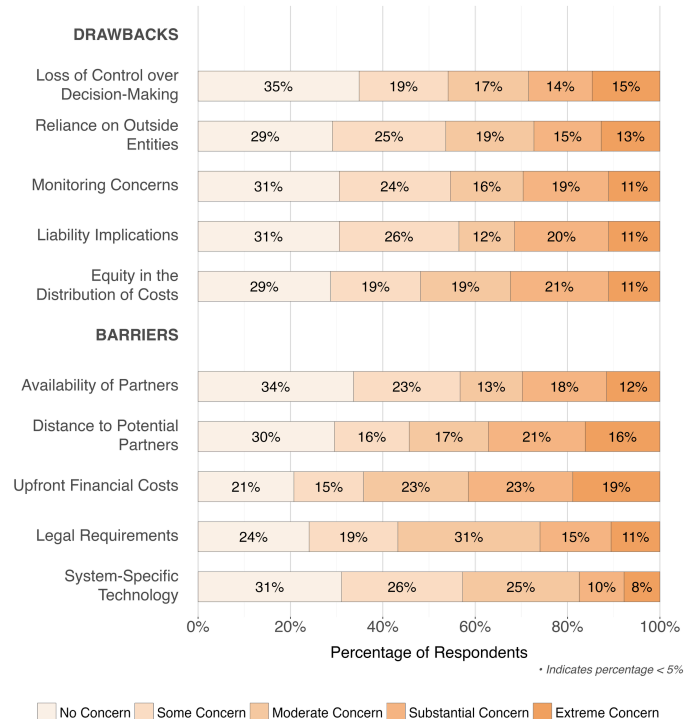
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

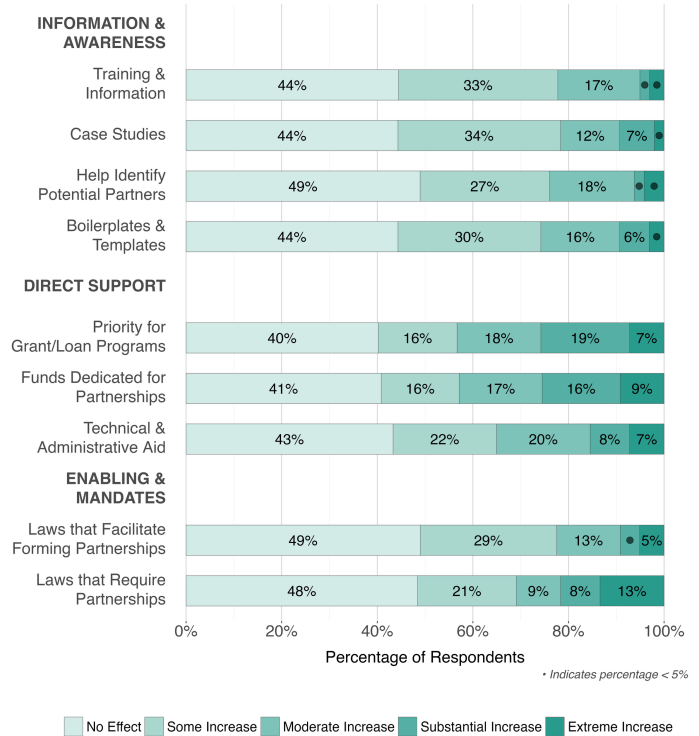




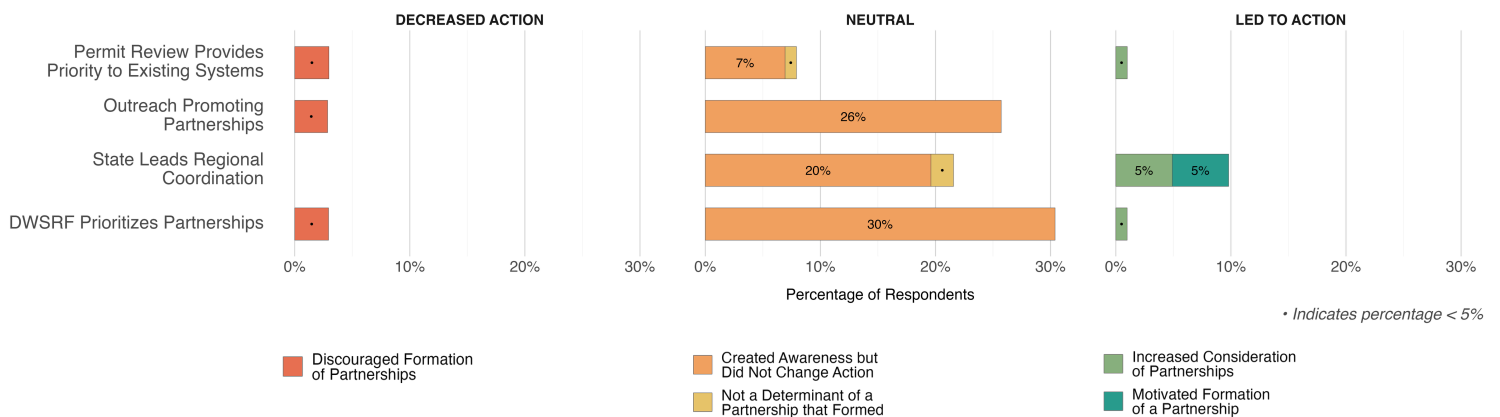
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	7%
Joint Ownership	1%	0%	9%
Shared Staff	2%	0%	9%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	0%	30%
Short-Term Contracting	8%	0%	26%
Informal	3%	2%	37%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

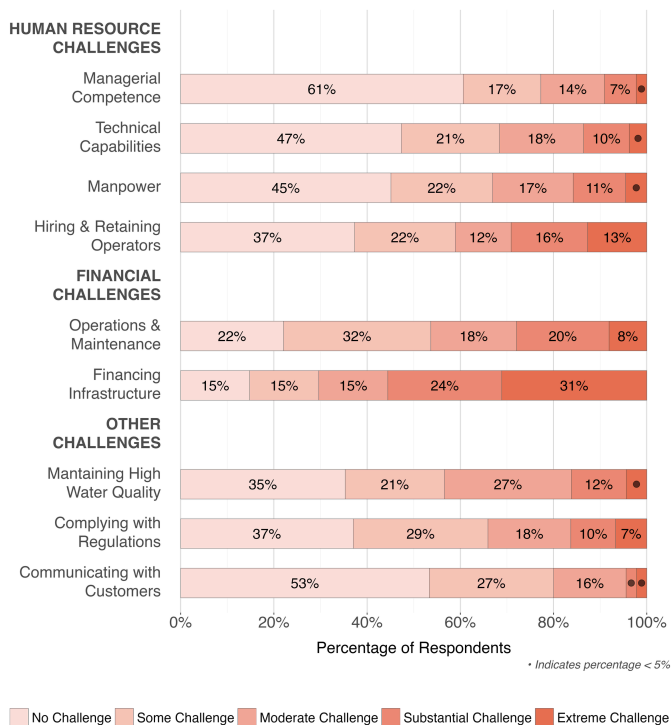


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



MINNESOTA

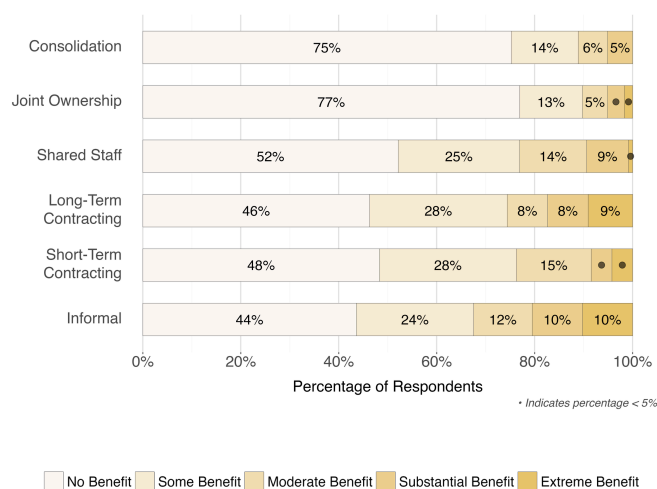
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



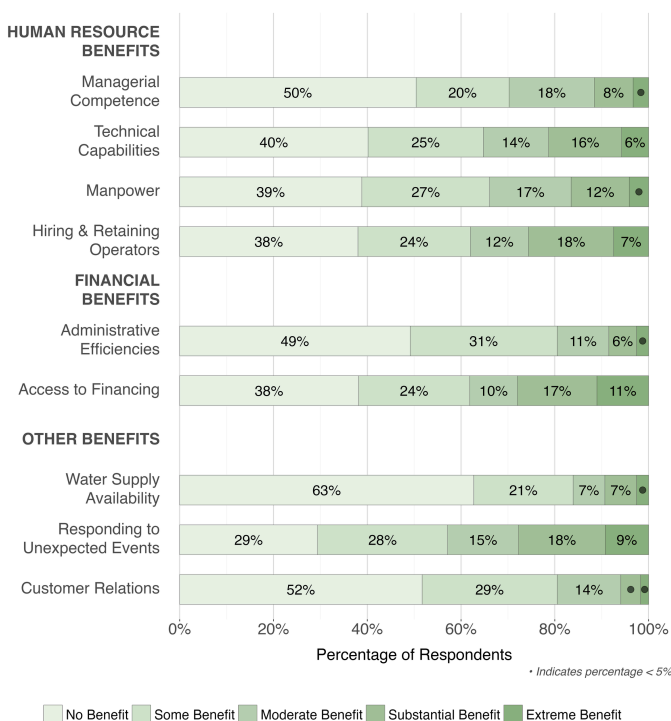
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	156	872	18%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	109	638	17%
Private	29	234	19%
Community	16		
Other	2	0	N/A

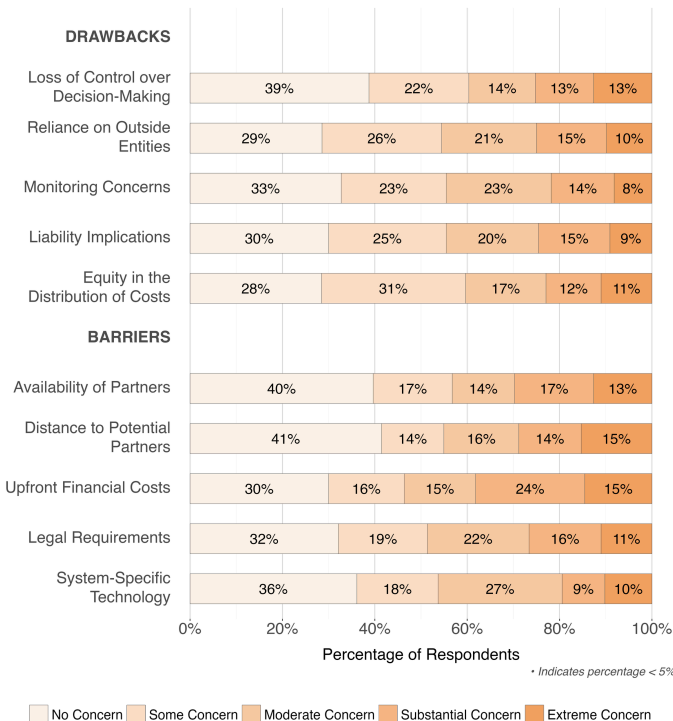
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

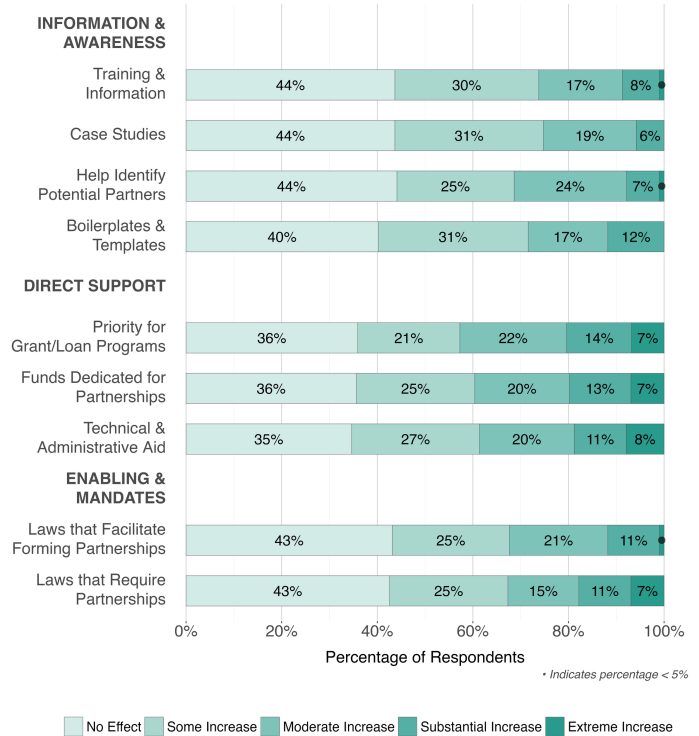


MINNESOTA

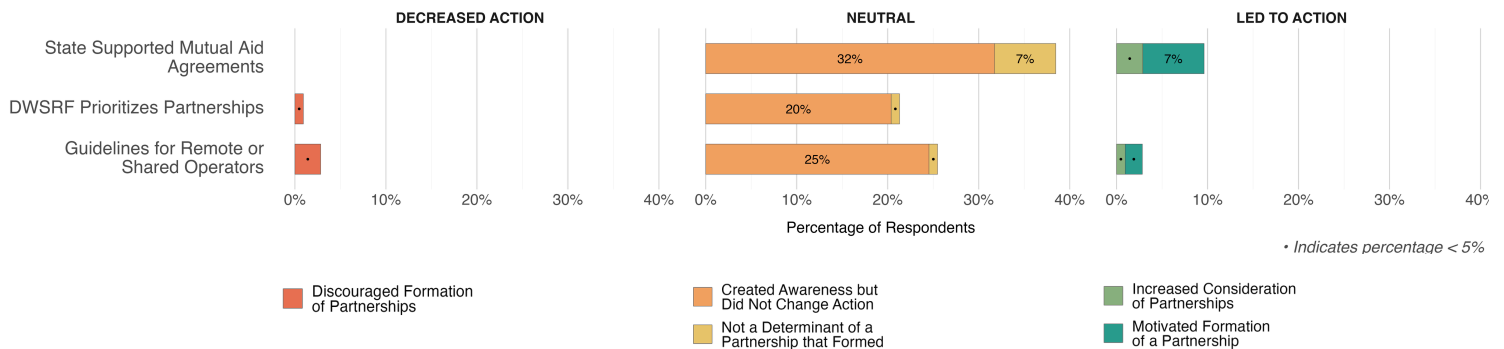
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	2%	1%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	0%	28%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	0%	22%
Informal	1%	1%	29%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

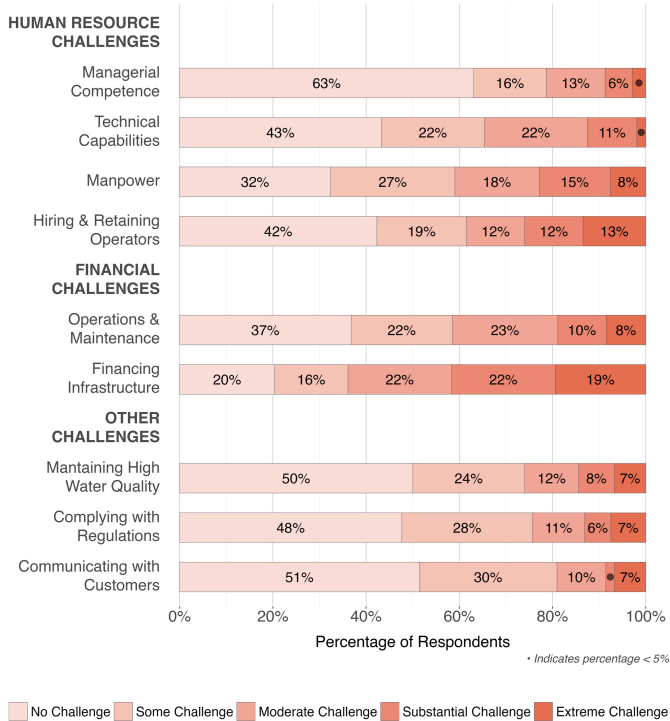


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



MISSISSIPPI

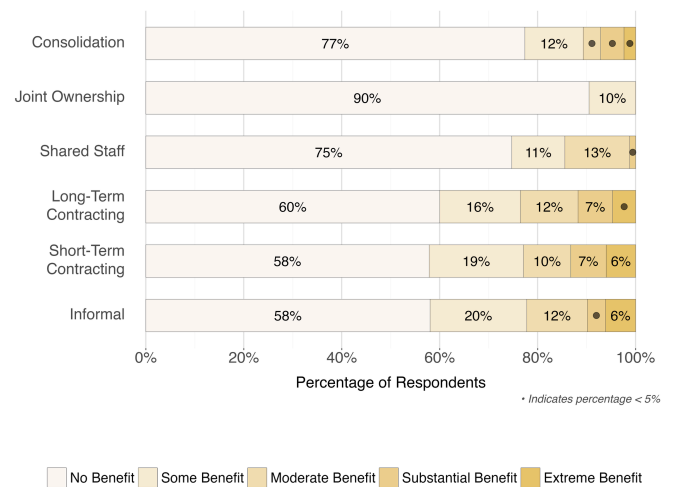
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



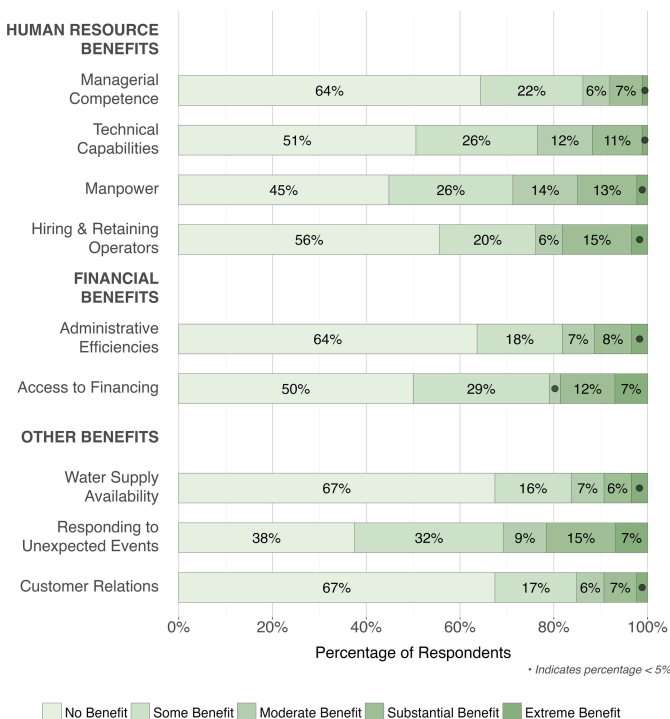
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	124	966	13%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	52	281	19%
Private	6	65	72%
Community	41		
Other	25	620	4%

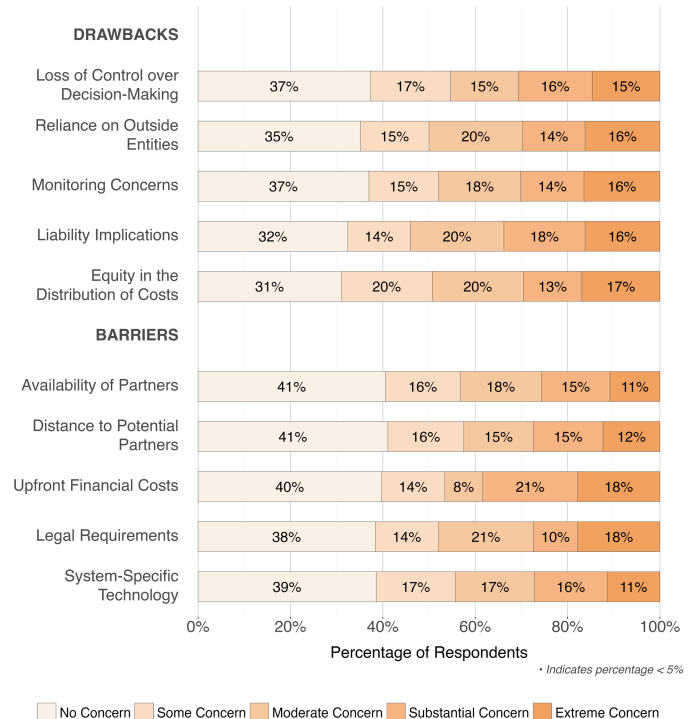
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

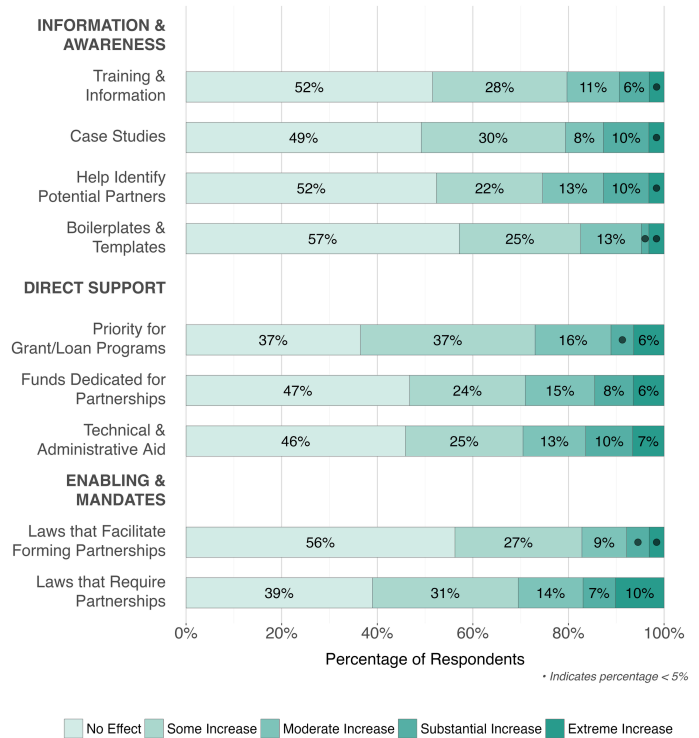


MISSISSIPPI

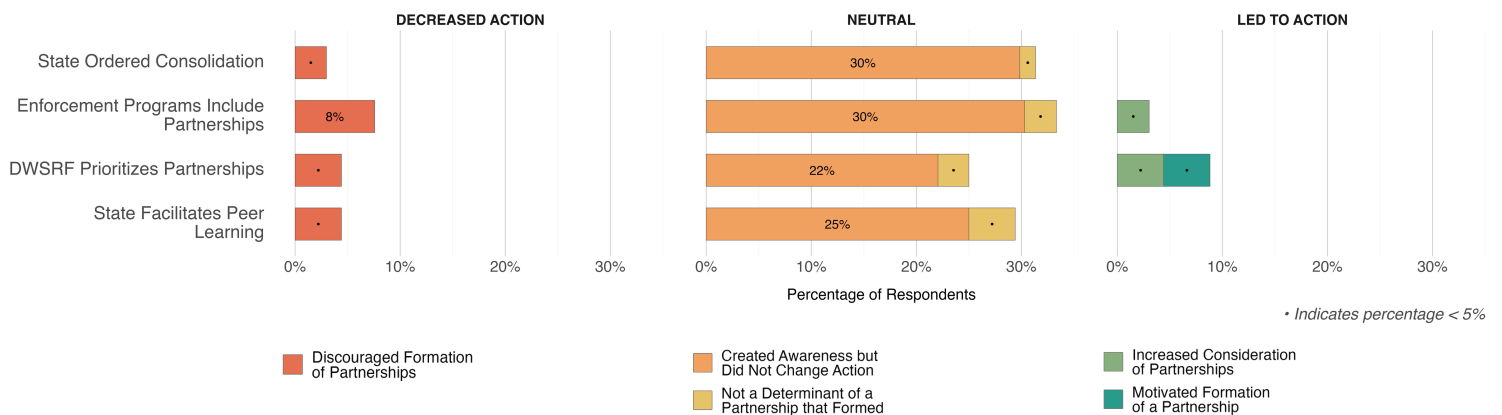
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	2%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	1%	26%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	1%	24%
Informal	2%	0%	17%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

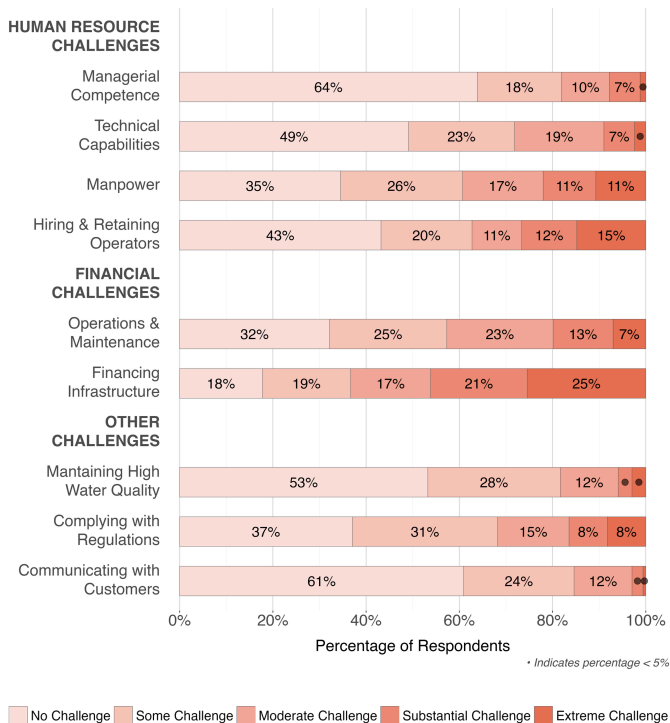


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





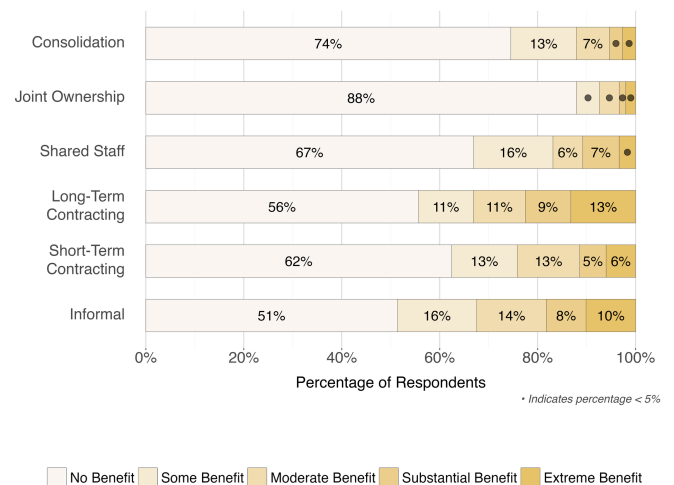
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



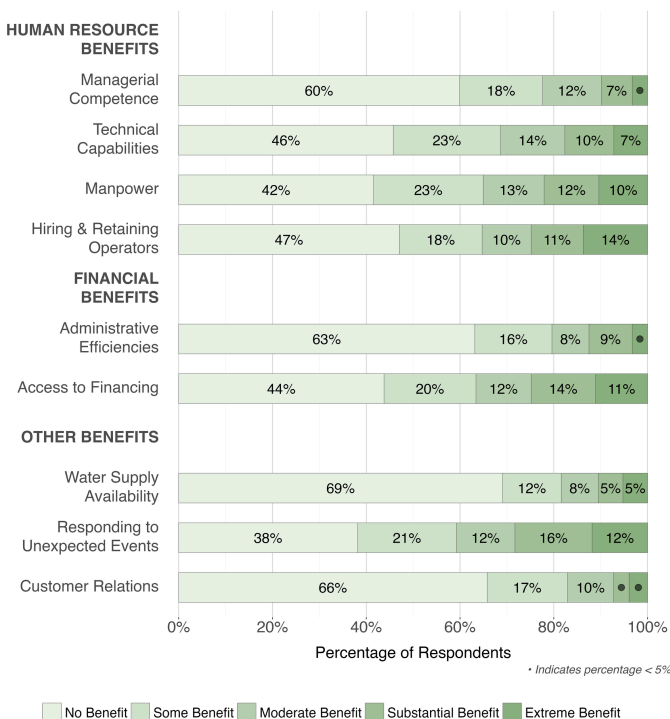
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	180	1351	13%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	99	777	13%
Private	27	567	14%
Community	51		
Other	3	7	43%

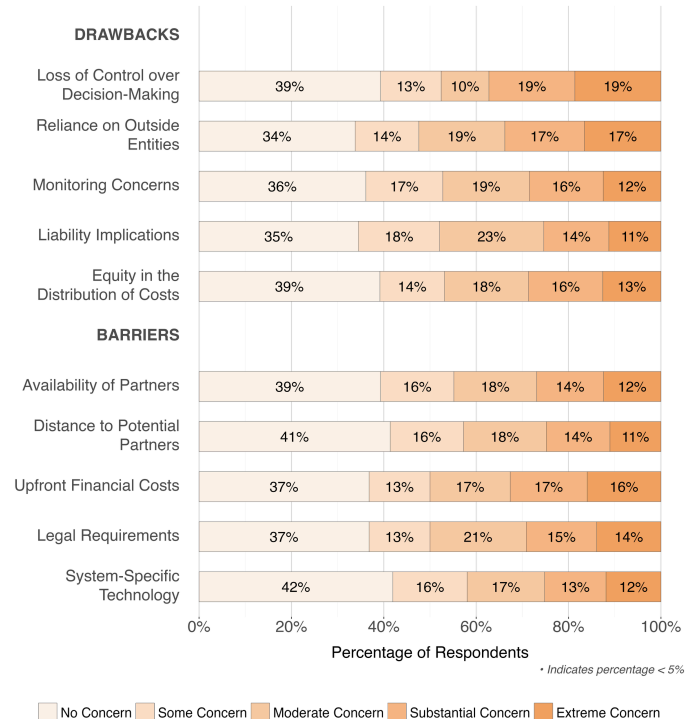
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

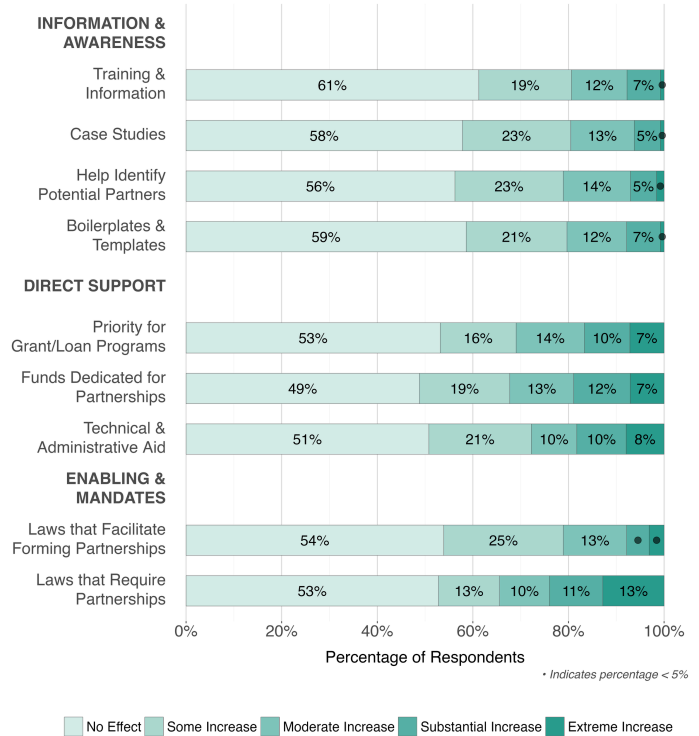




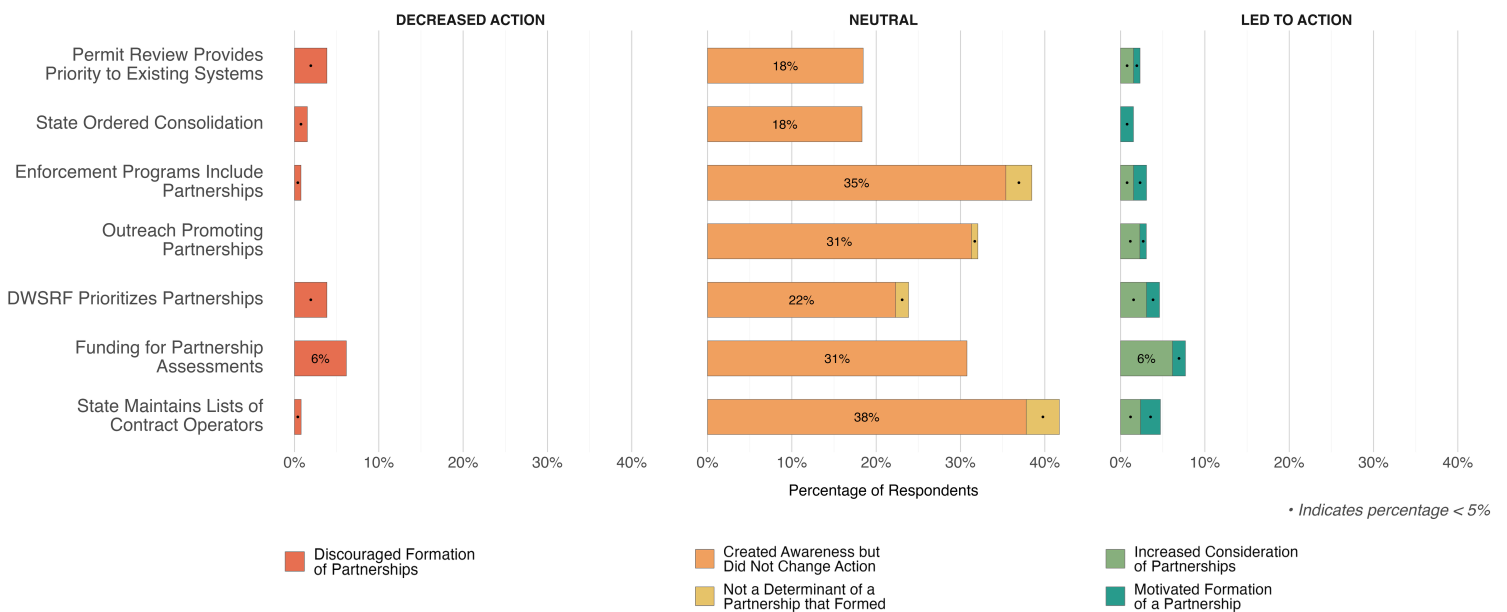
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	1%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	4%
Shared Staff	0%	1%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	1%	23%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	1%	14%
Informal	1%	0%	23%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

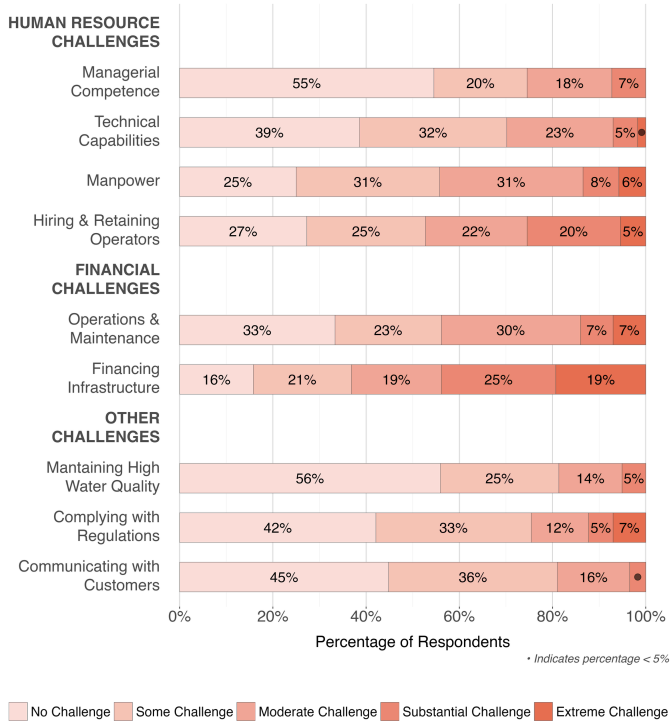


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





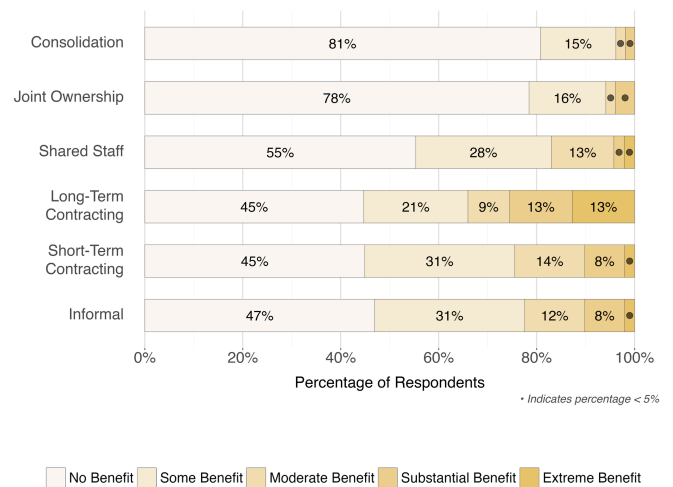
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



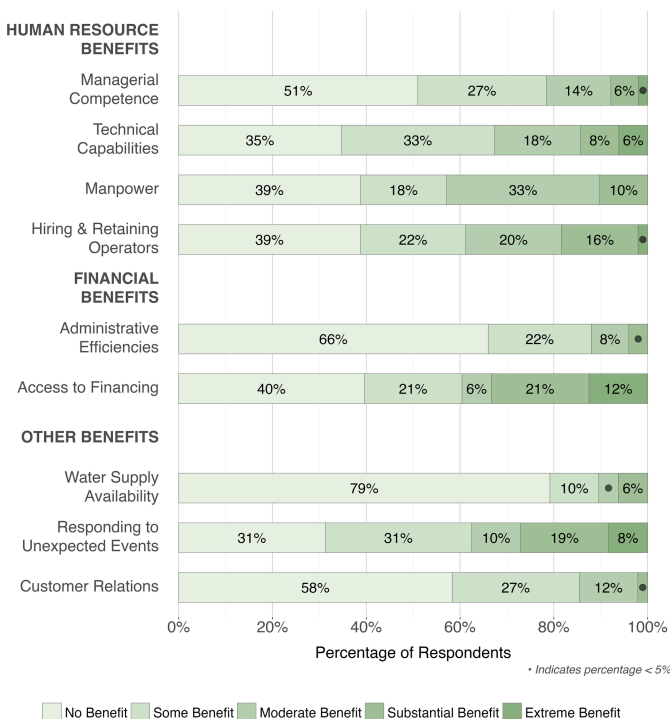
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	62	759	8%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	24	207	12%
Private	12	538	6%
Community	21		
Other	5	14	36%

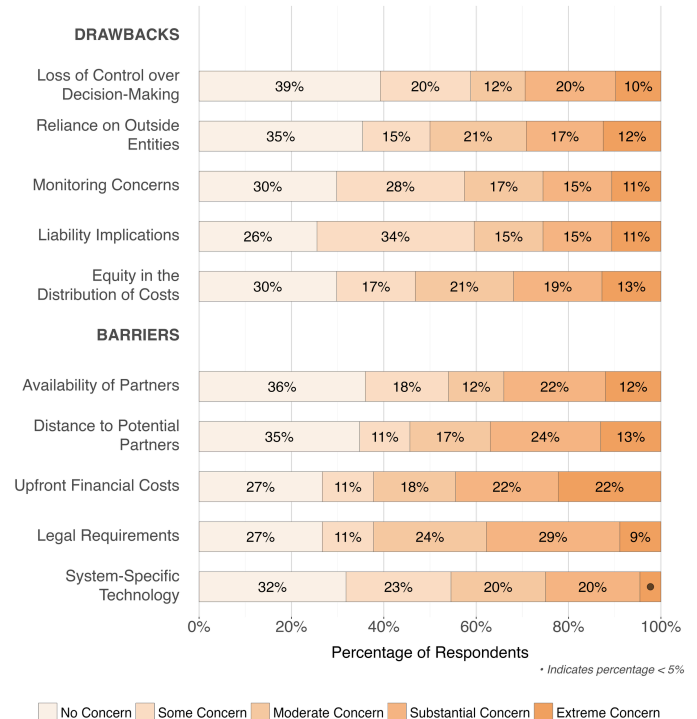
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

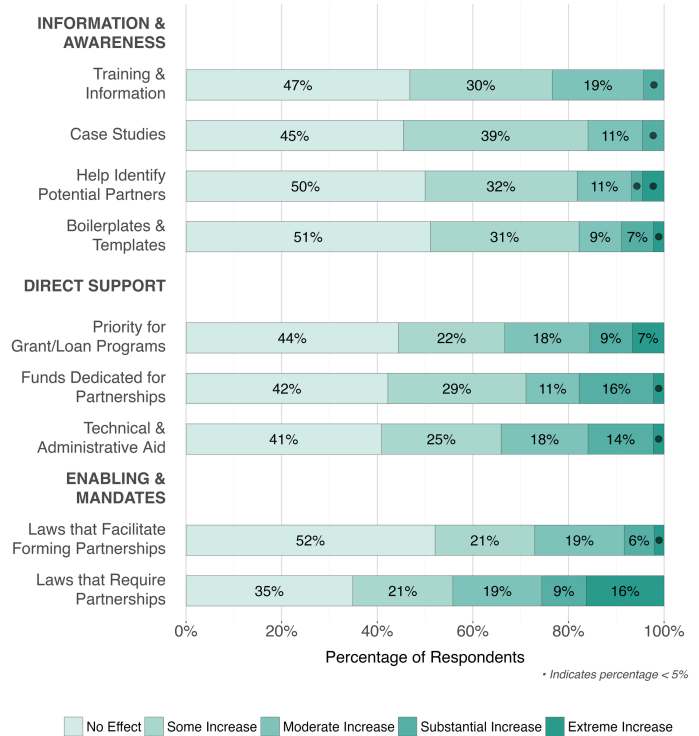


MONTANA

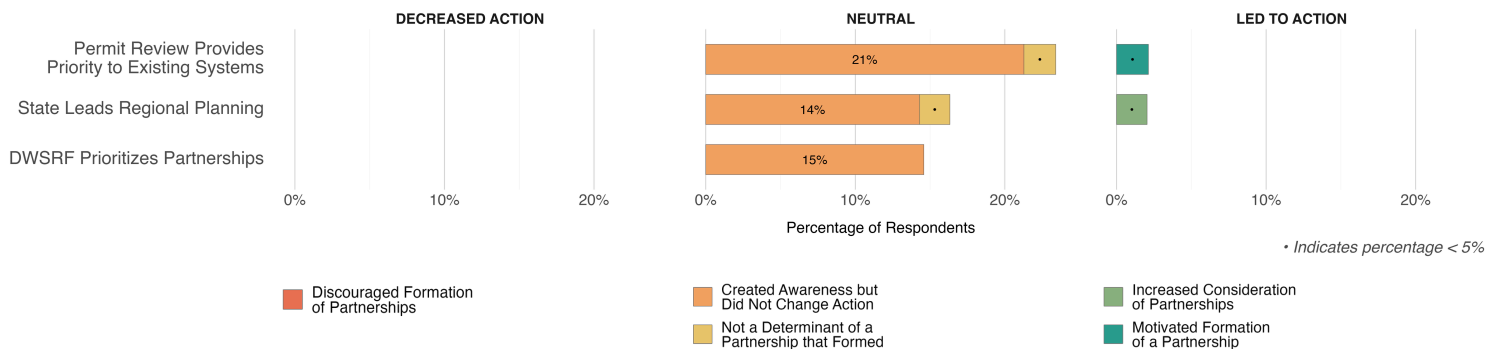
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	8%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	14%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	40%
Short-Term Contracting	11%	0%	28%
Informal	0%	0%	22%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

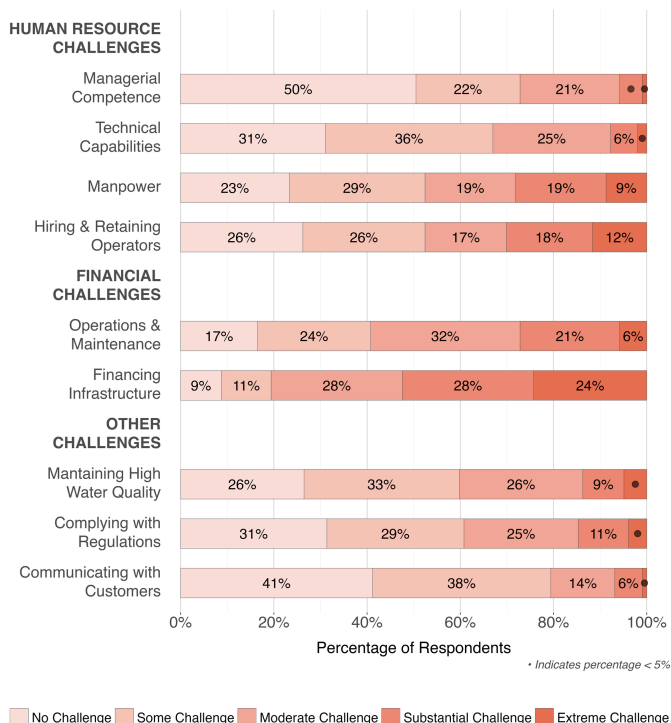


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NEBRASKA

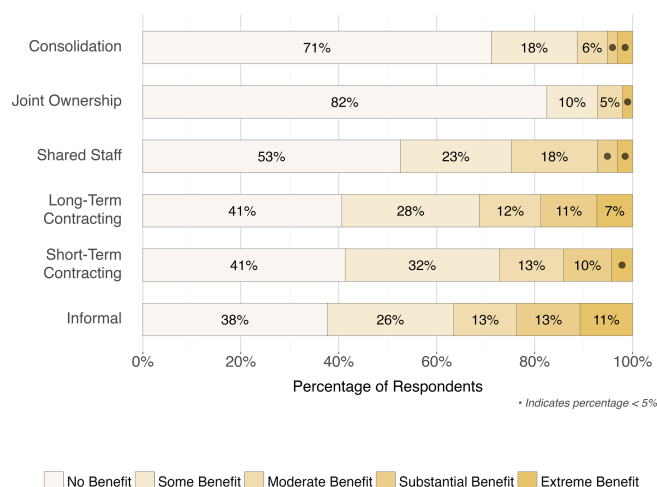
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



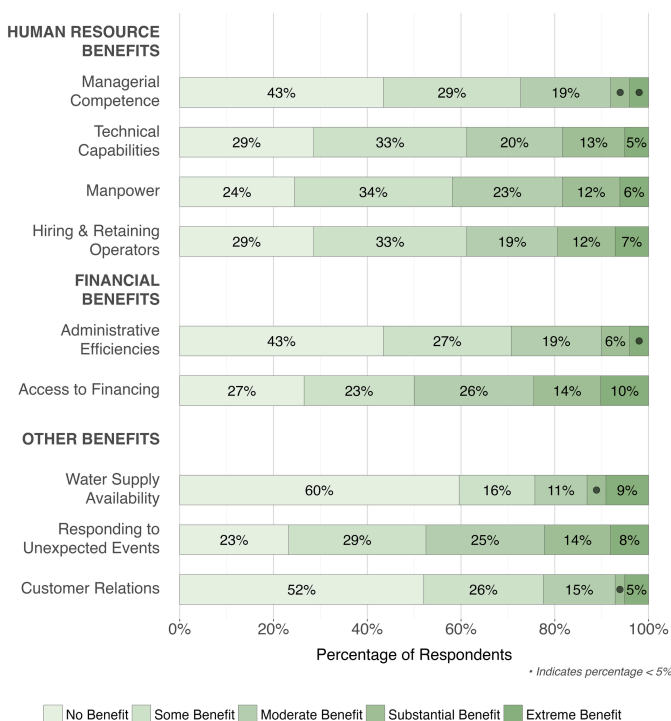
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	114	582	20%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	100	504	20%
Private	9	69	19%
Community	4		
Other	1	9	11%

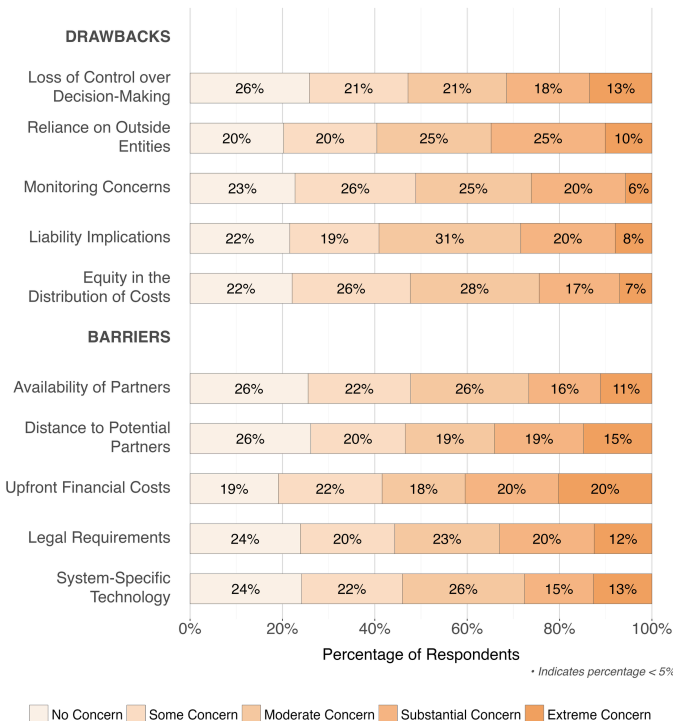
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

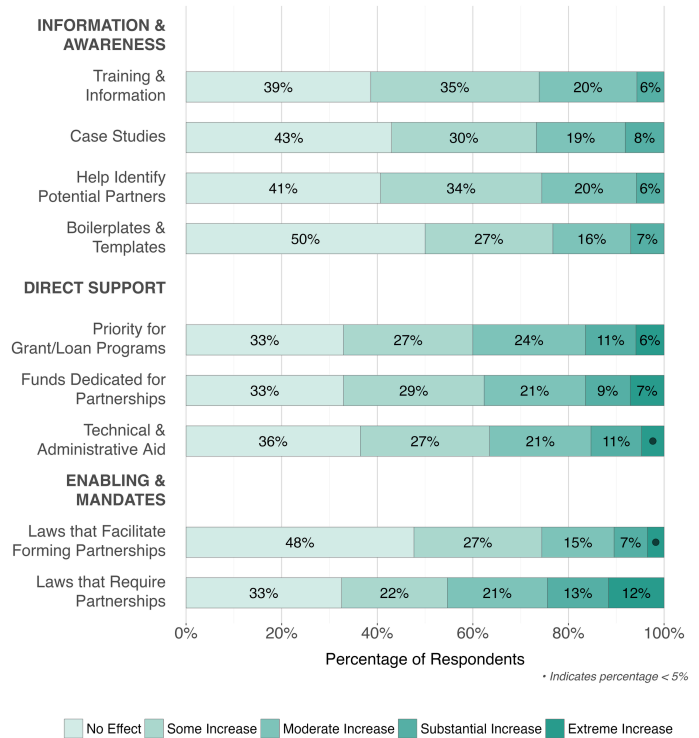


NEBRASKA

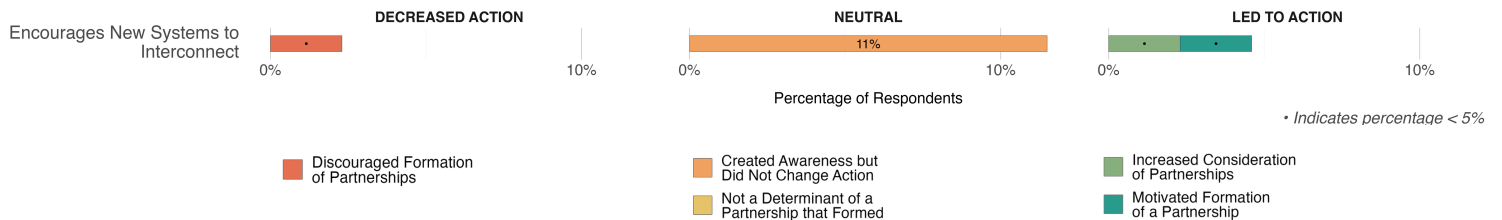
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	2%	0%	8%
Joint Ownership	0%	1%	5%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	13%
Long-Term Contracting	4%	0%	28%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	2%	22%
Informal	3%	0%	27%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

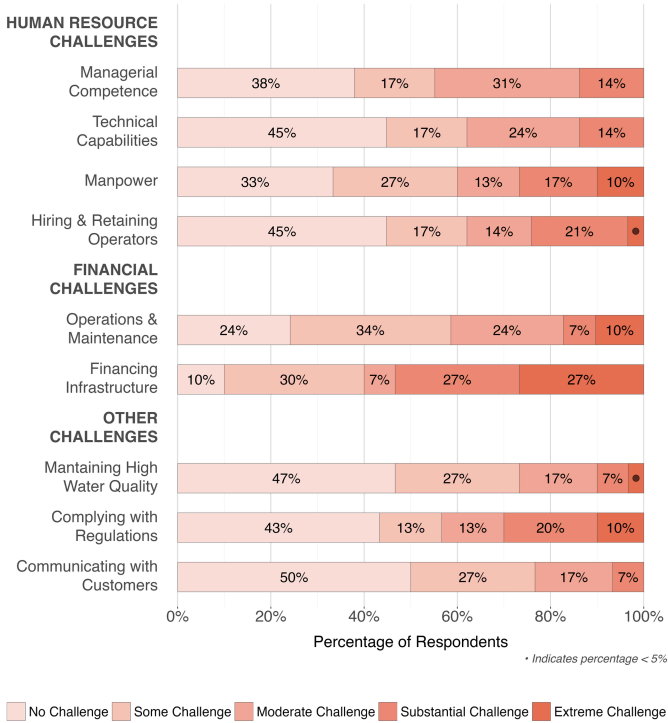


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NEVADA

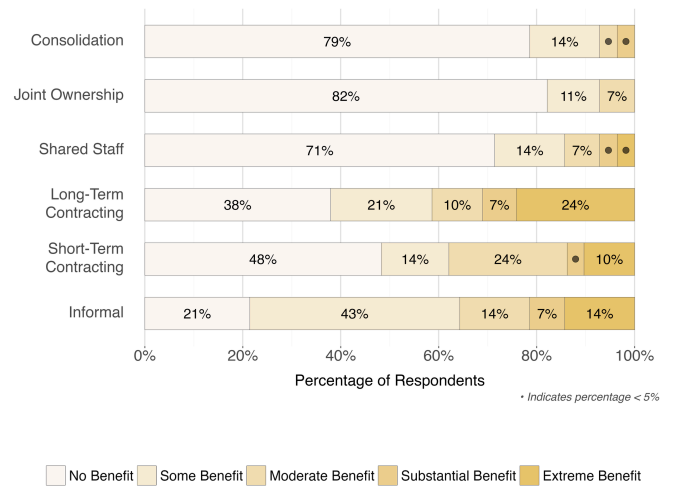
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



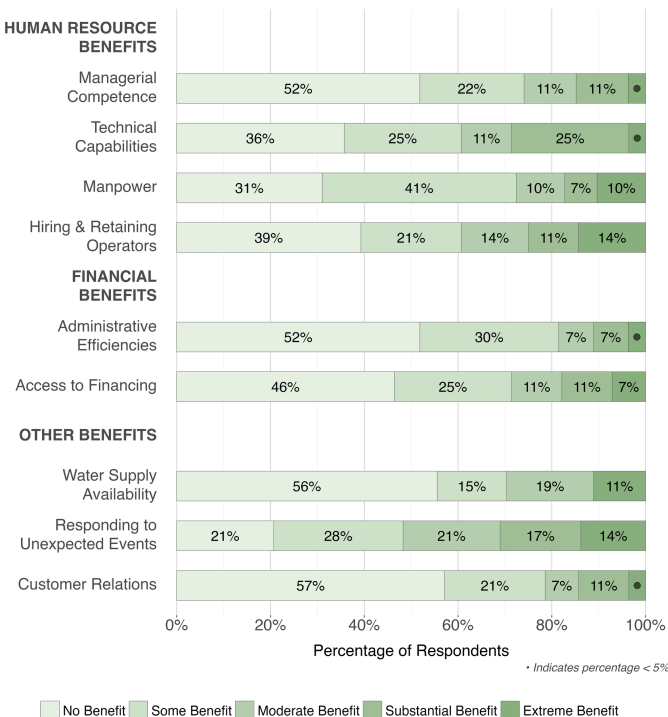
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	30	182	16%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	11	69	16%
Private	9	103	17%
Community	9		
Other	1	10	10%

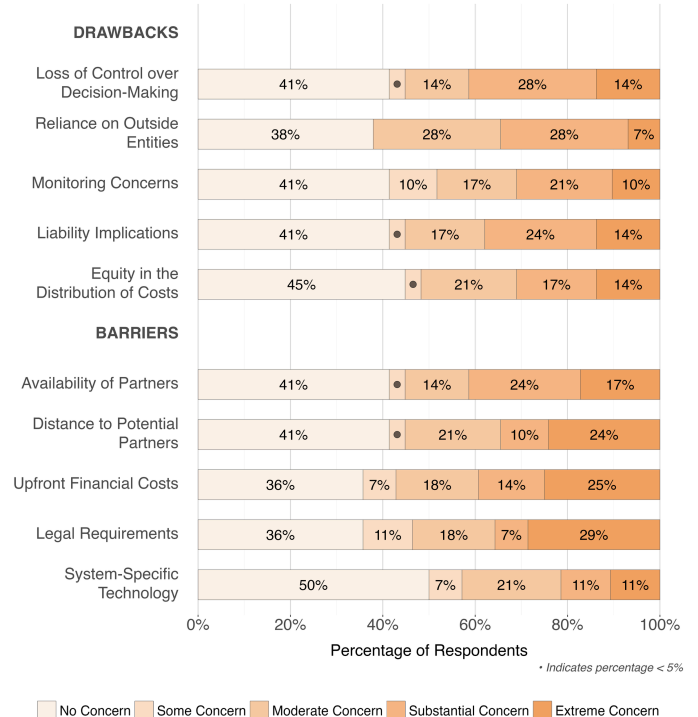
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

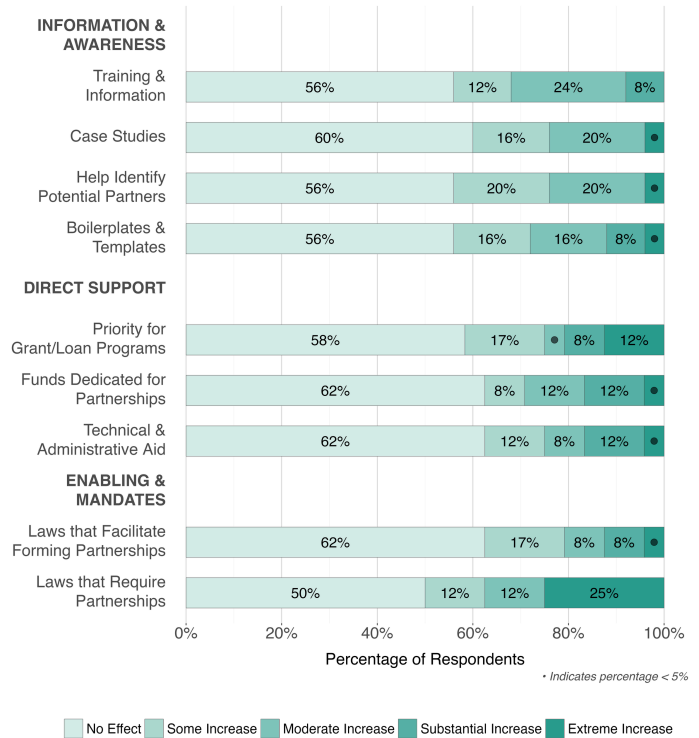


NEVADA

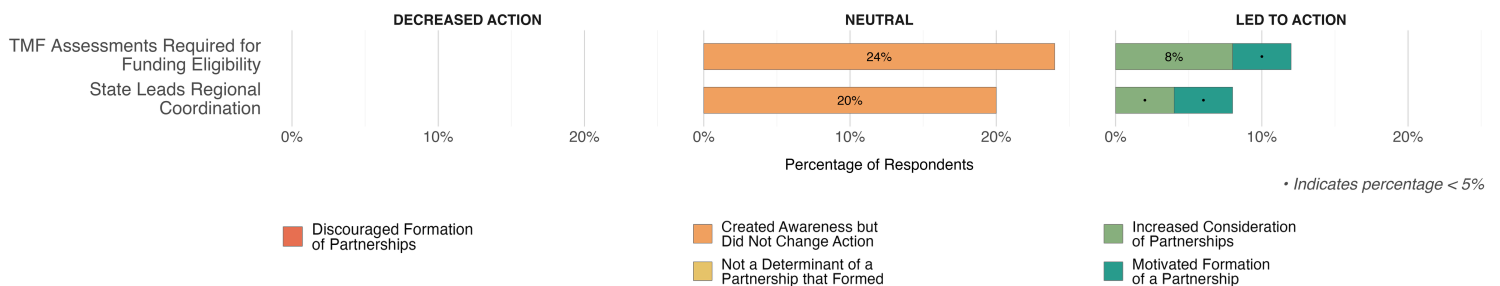
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	0%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	11%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	26%
Short-Term Contracting	12%	0%	28%
Informal	4%	0%	27%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

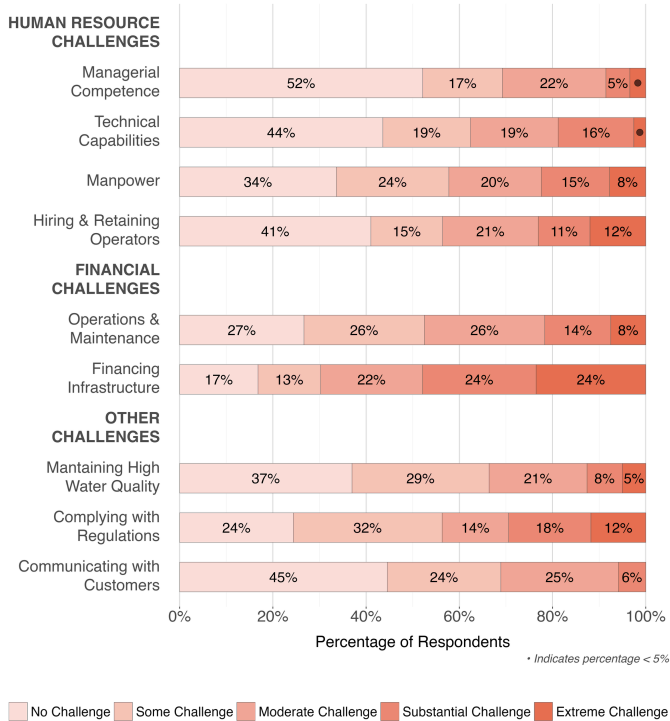


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NEW HAMPSHIRE

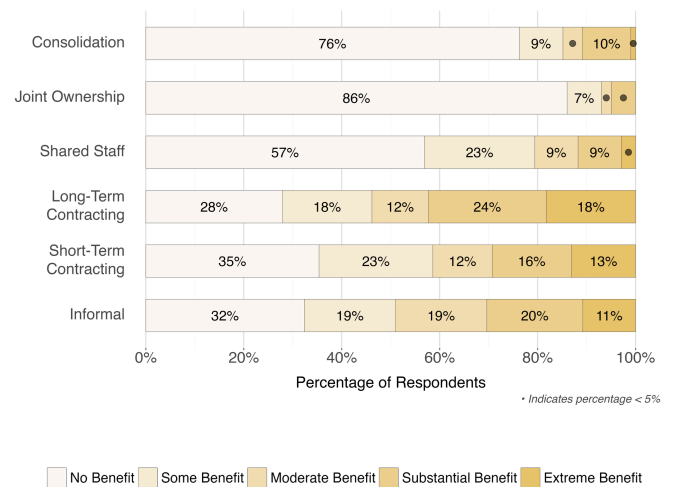
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



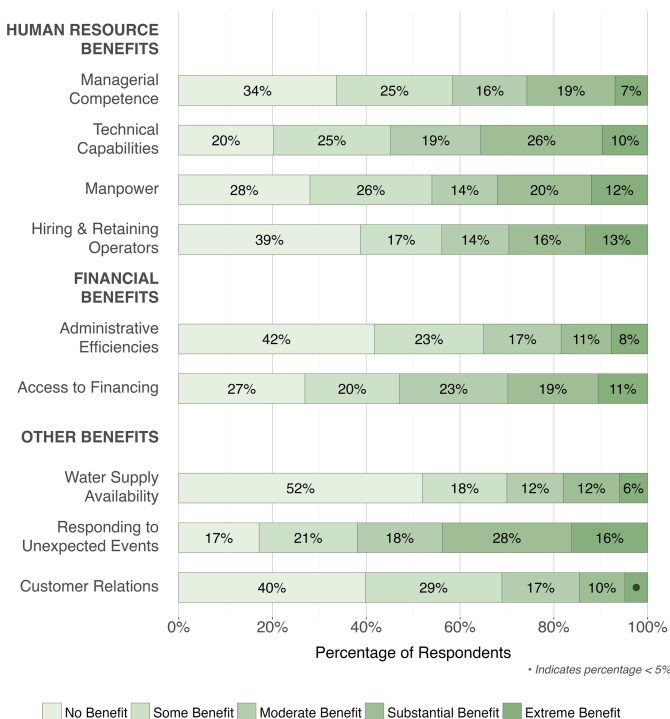
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	129	690	19%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	30	127	24%
Private	33	561	17%
Community	64		
Other	2	2	100%

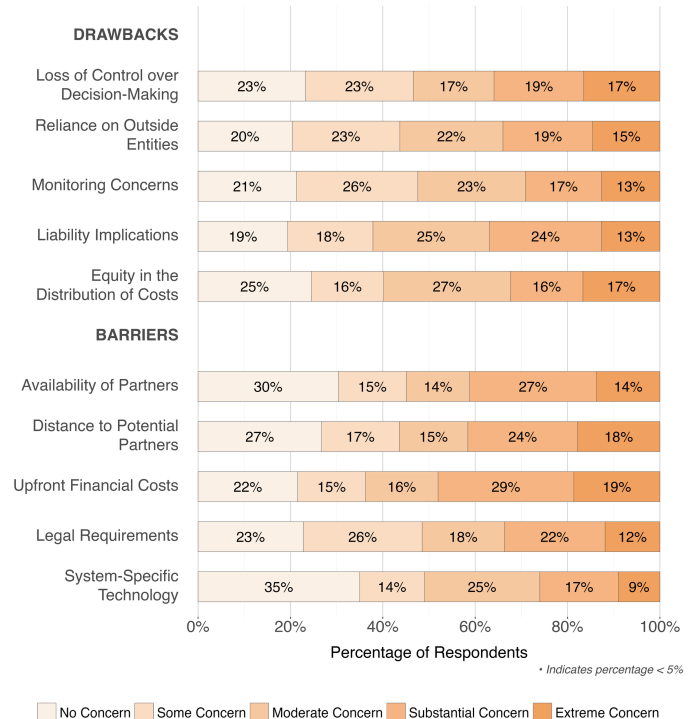
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

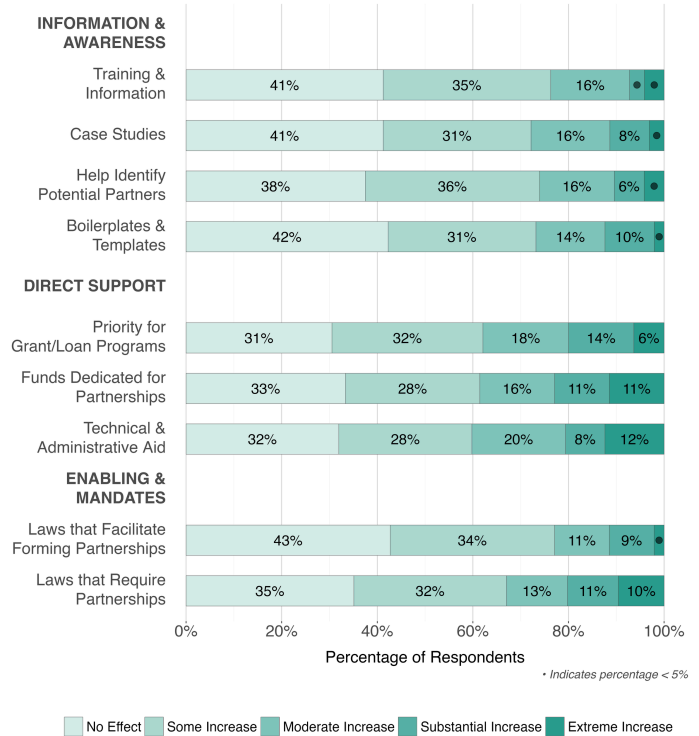


NEW HAMPSHIRE

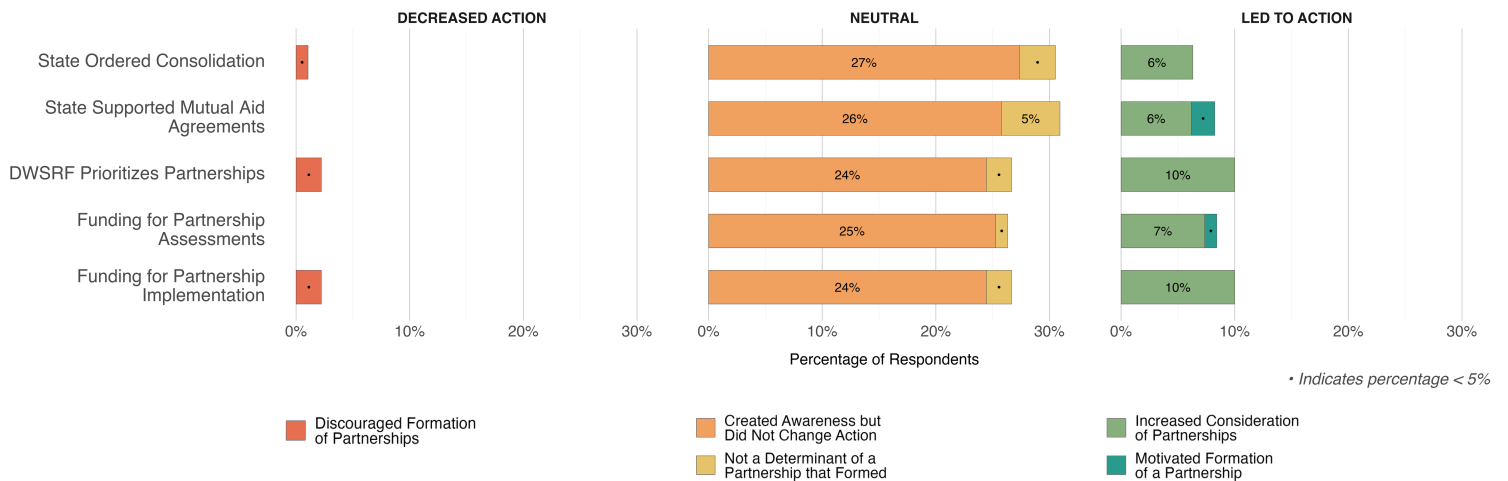
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	5%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	2%	0%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	49%
Short-Term Contracting	8%	2%	24%
Informal	4%	0%	25%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

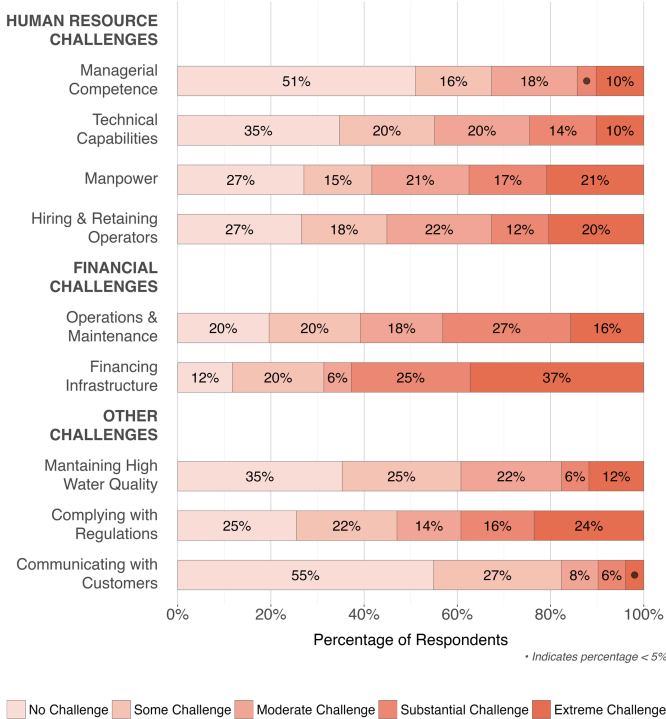


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NEW JERSEY

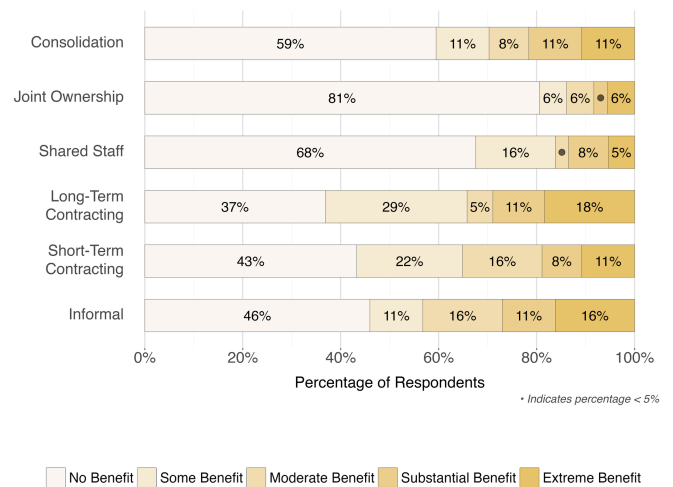
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



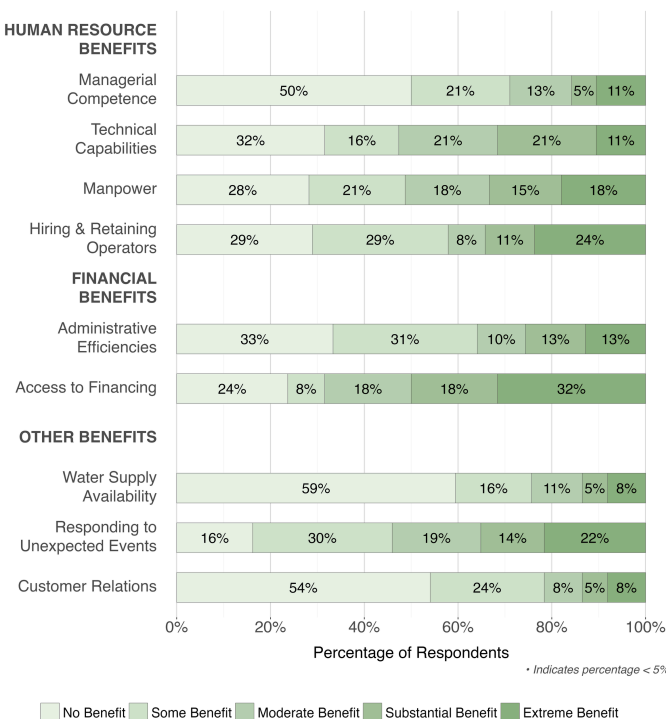
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	56	407	14%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	22	155	14%
Private	22	241	12%
Community	7		
Other	5	11	45%

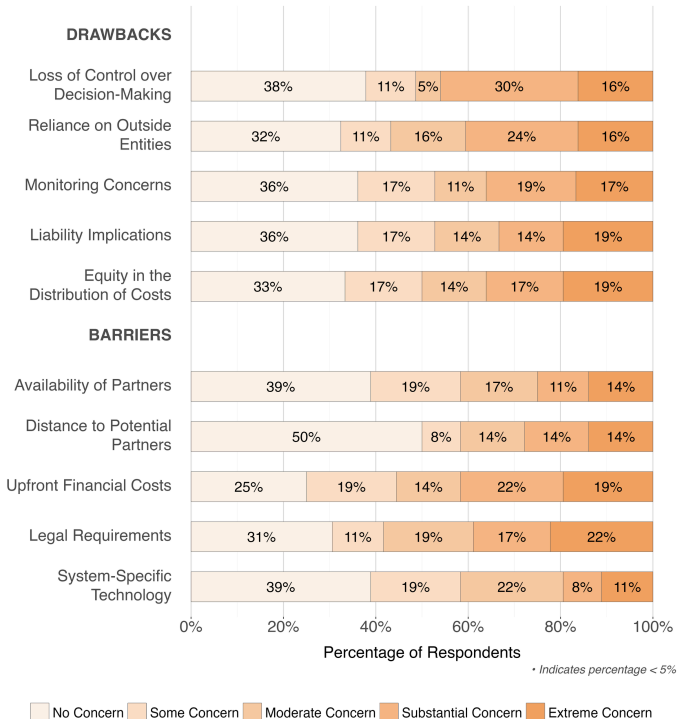
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

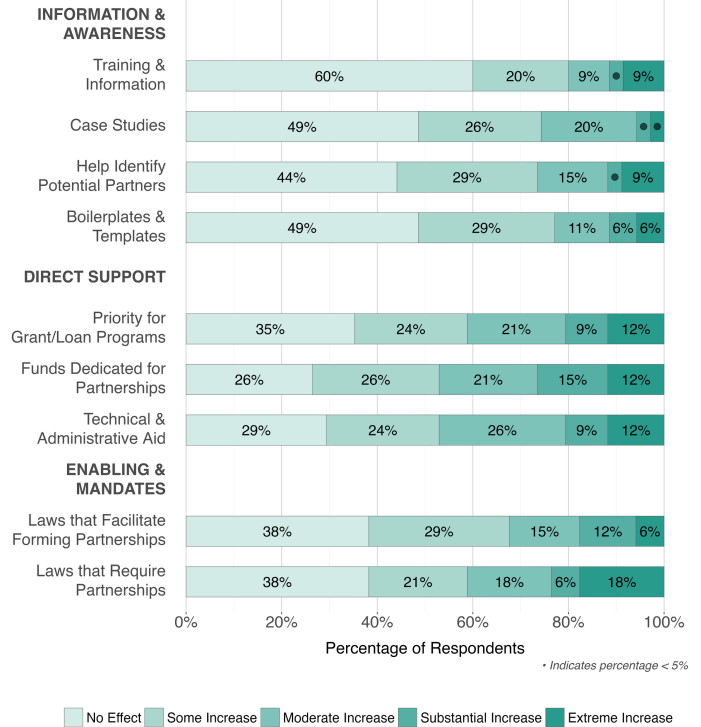




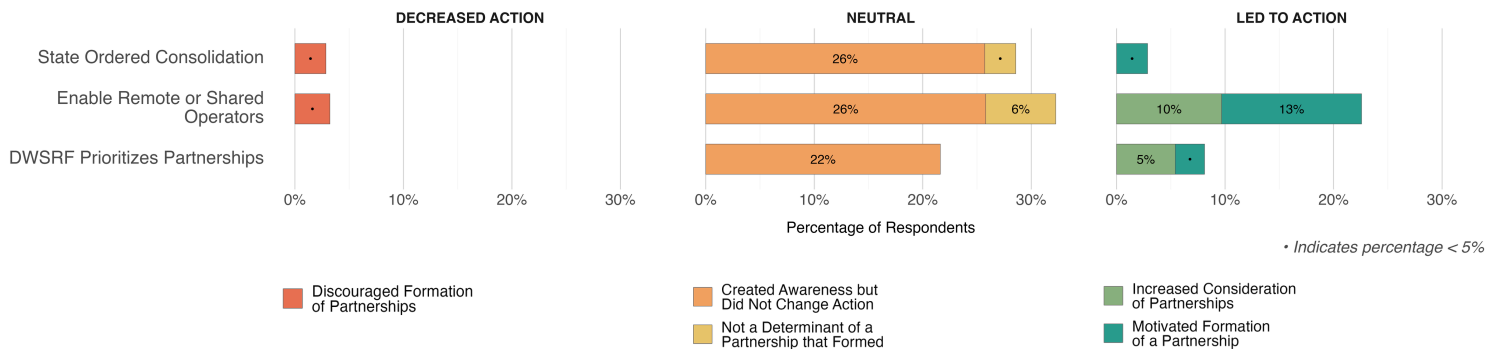
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	2%	2%	5%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	34%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	0%	15%
Informal	2%	0%	24%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

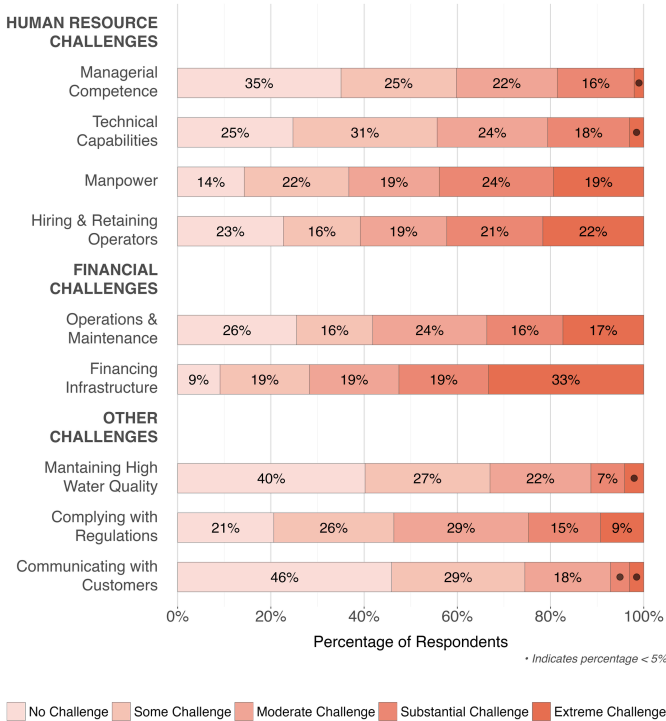


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NEW MEXICO

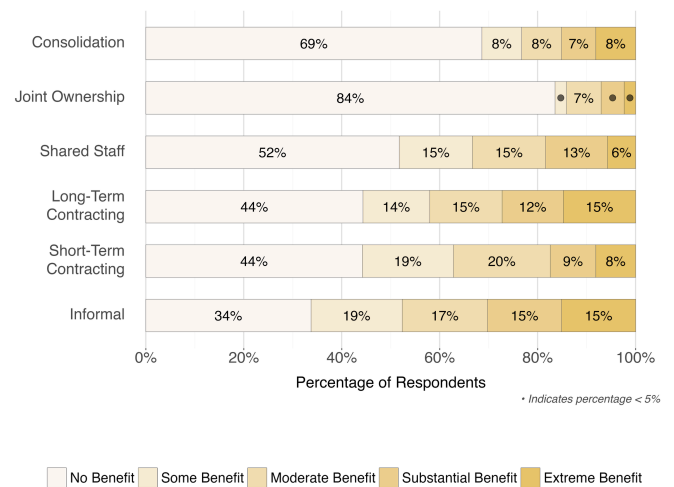
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



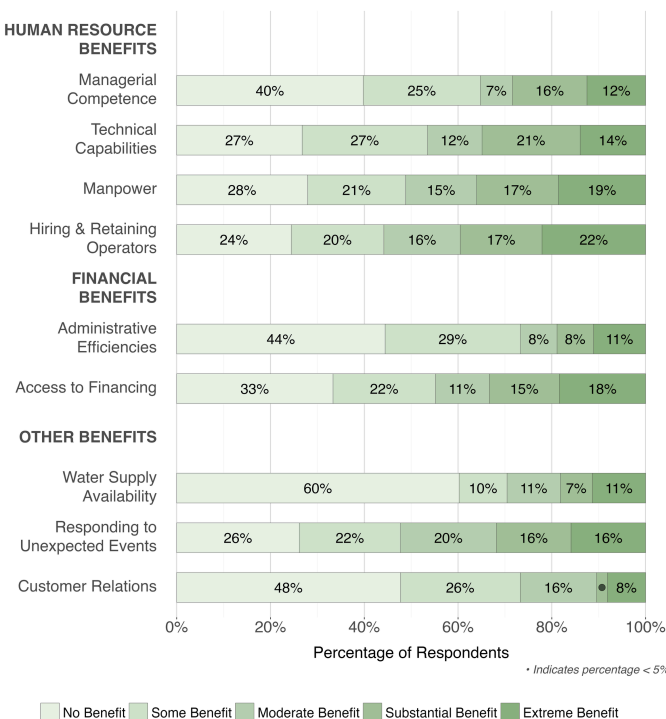
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	107	537	20%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	43	325	13%
Private	10	206	31%
Community	53		
Other	1	6	2%

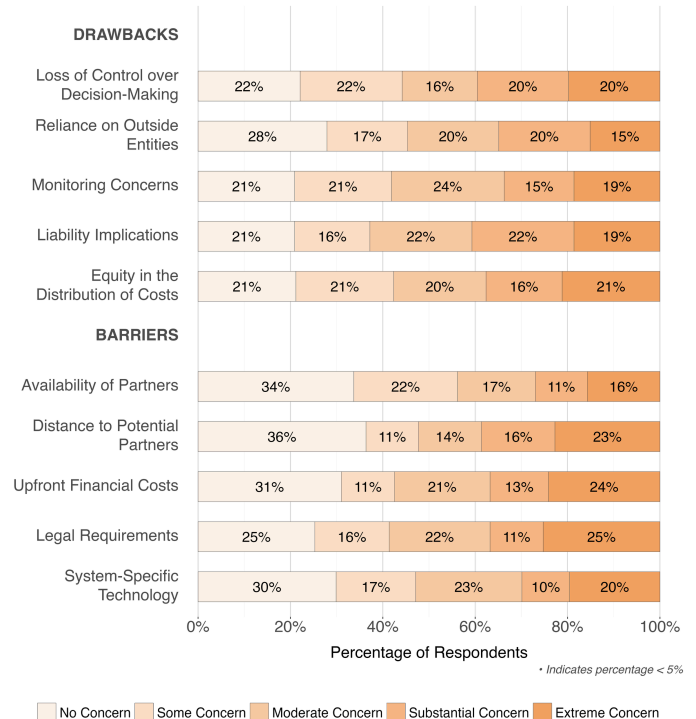
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

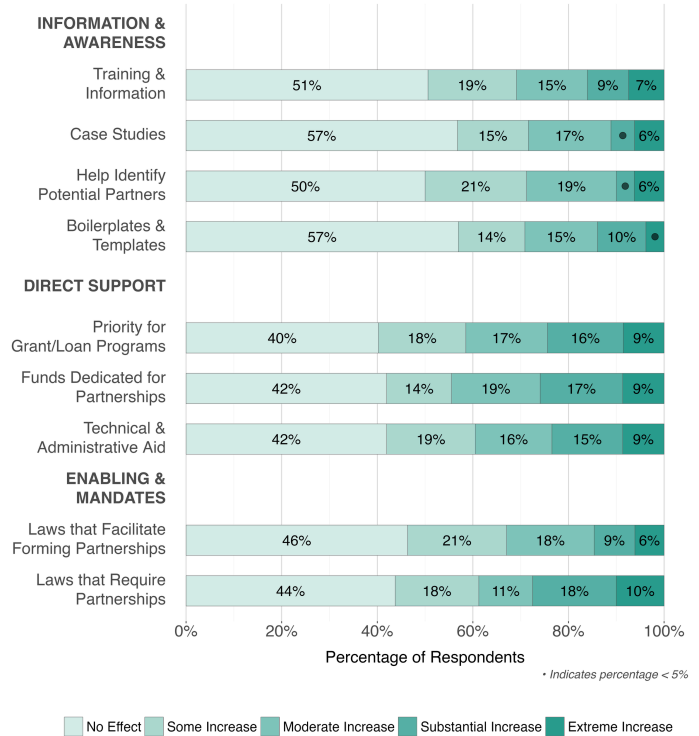


NEW MEXICO

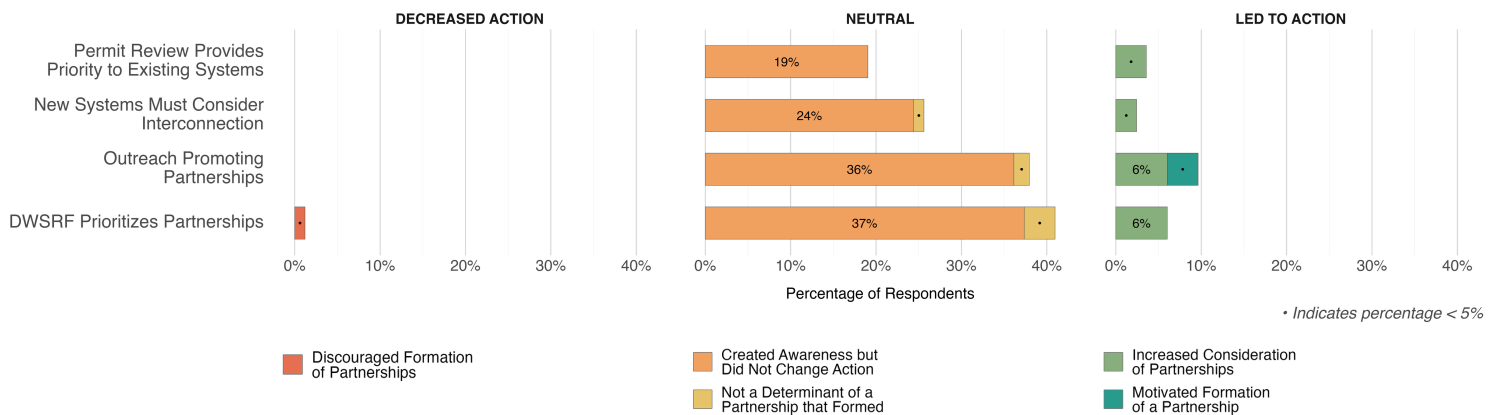
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	2%	0%	3%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	4%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	8%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	1%	27%
Short-Term Contracting	7%	1%	23%
Informal	6%	1%	33%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

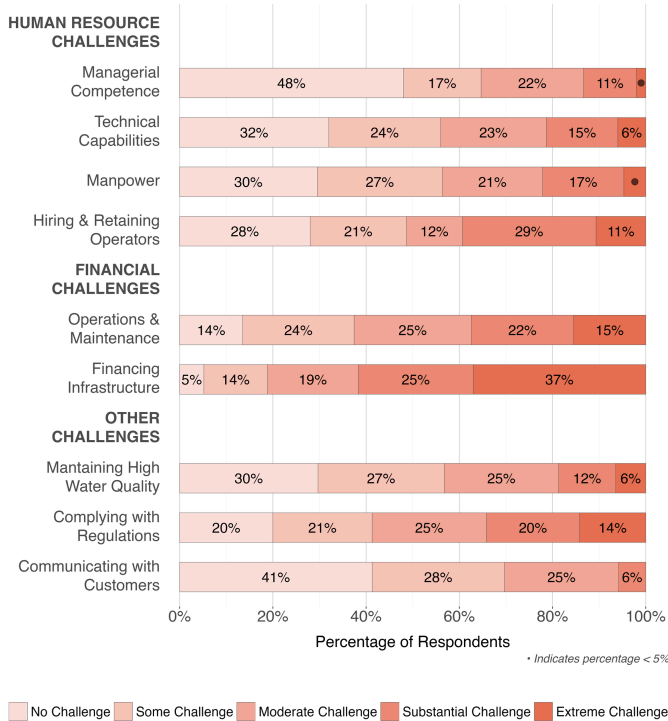


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NEW YORK

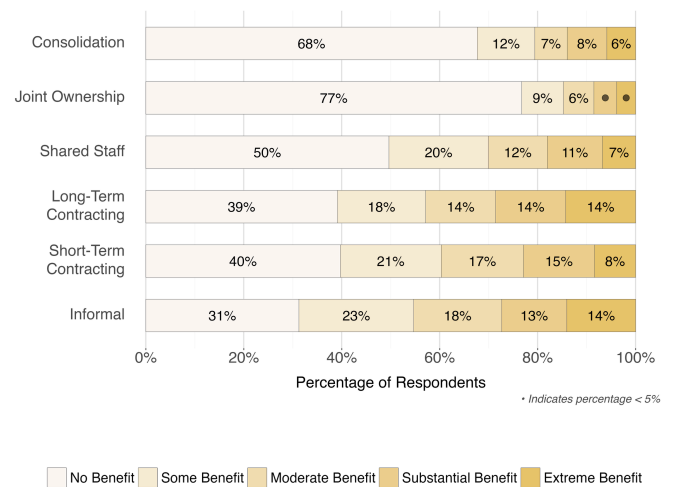
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



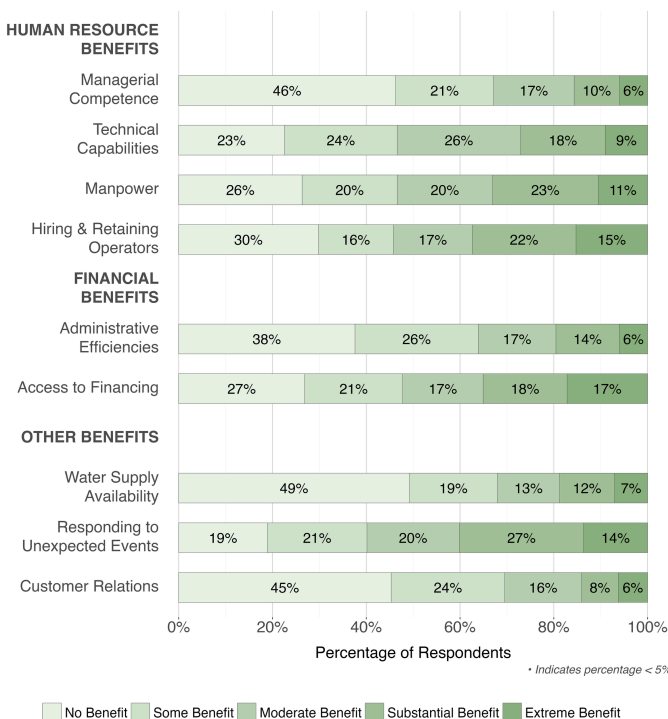
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	176	2129	8%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	84	1002	8%
Private	78	1067	9%
Community	13		
Other	1	60	2%

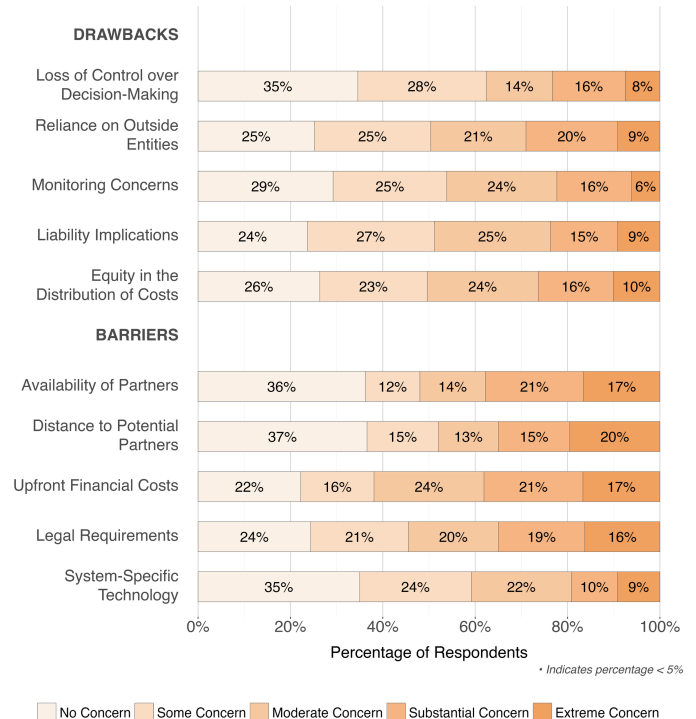
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

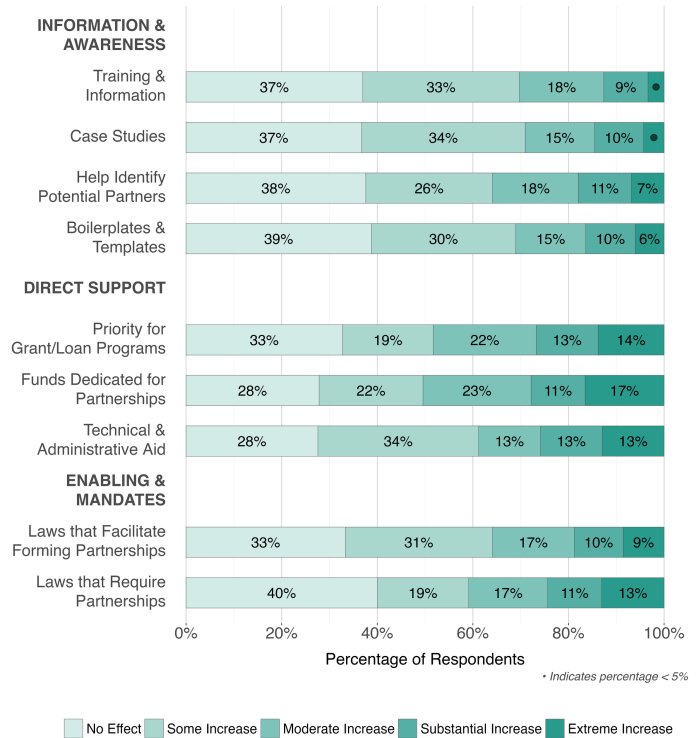


NEW YORK

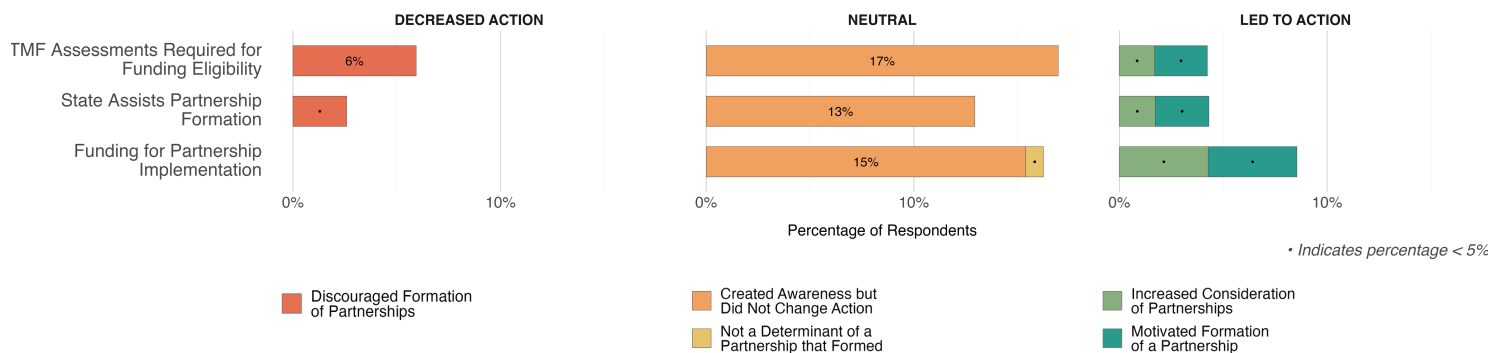
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	6%
Joint Ownership	0%	1%	6%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	9%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	1%	31%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	1%	23%
Informal	2%	2%	29%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

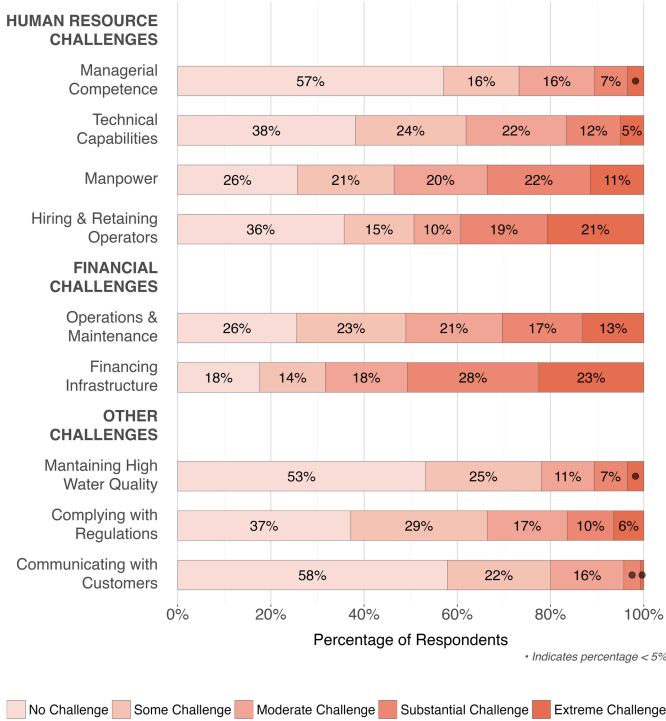


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NORTH CAROLINA

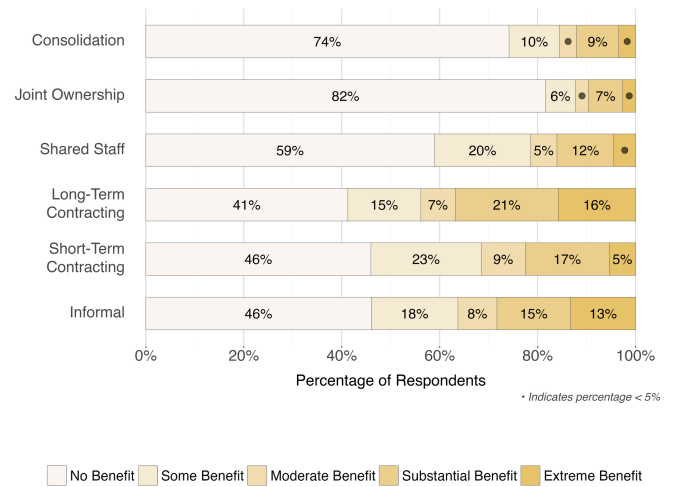
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



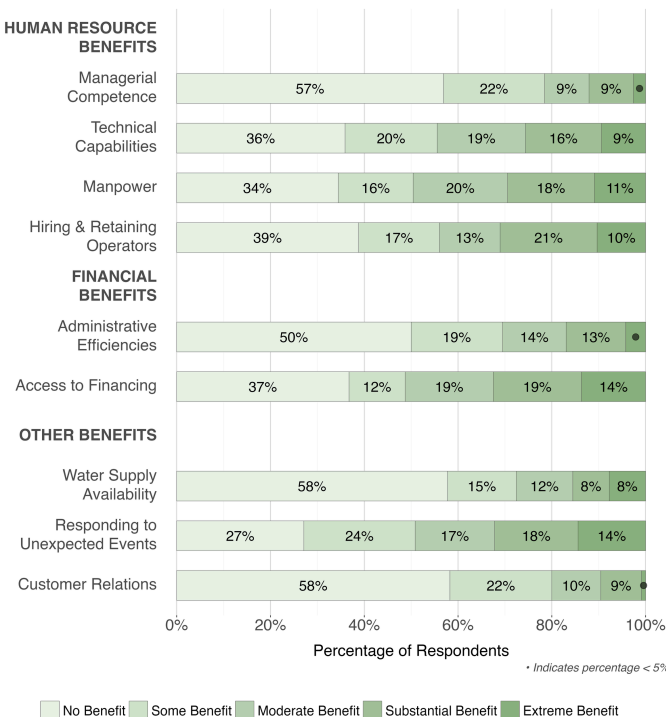
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	158	1852	9%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	71	415	17%
Private	59	1431	6%
Community	26		
Other	2	6	33%

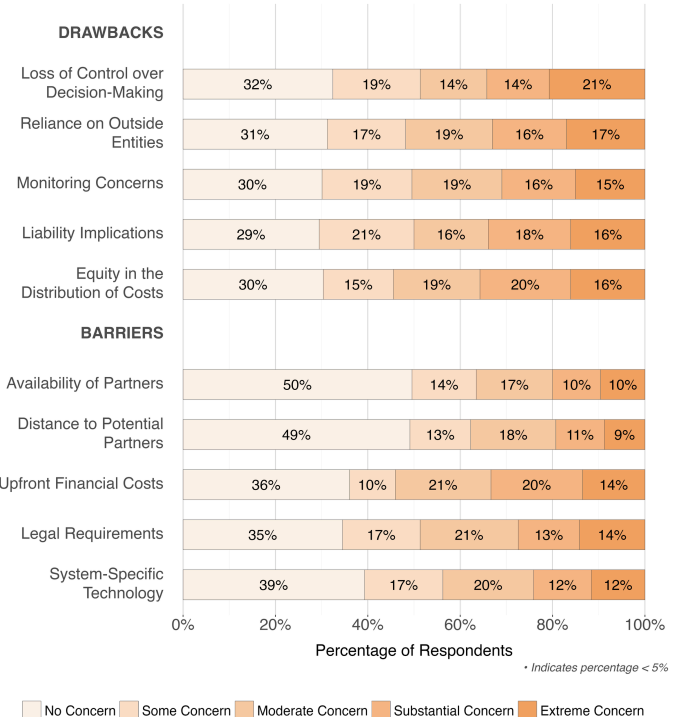
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

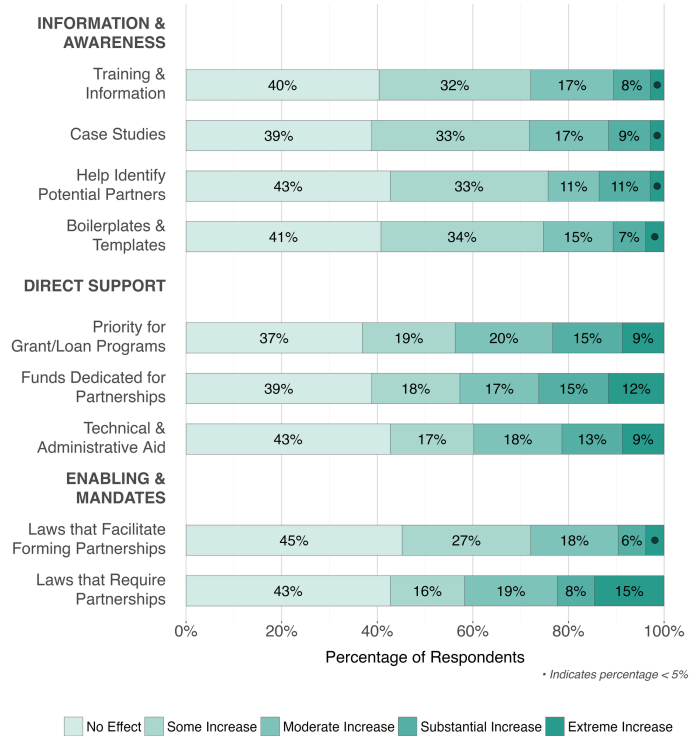


NORTH CAROLINA

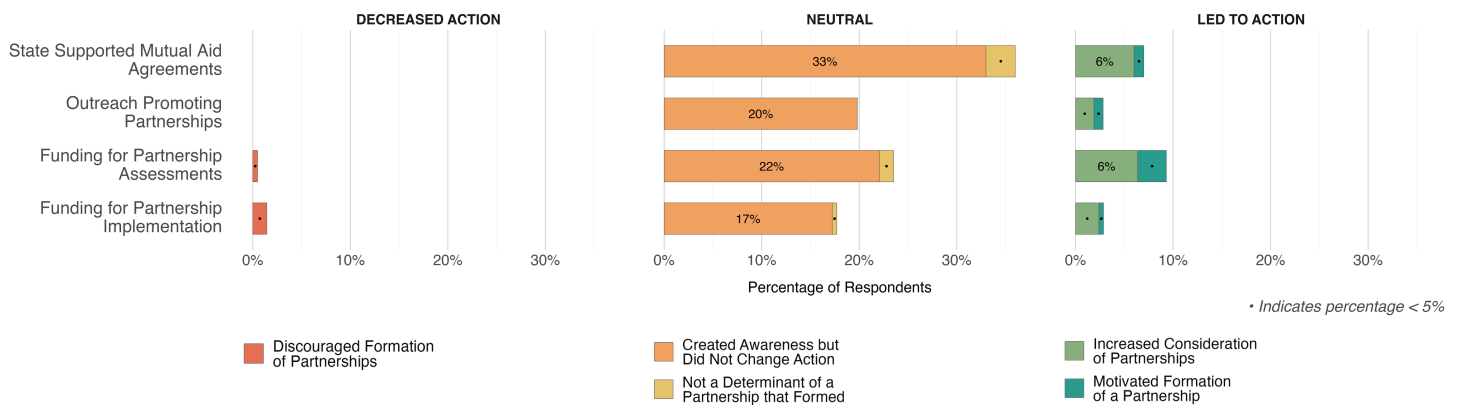
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	6%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	1%	40%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	1%	24%
Informal	1%	0%	32%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

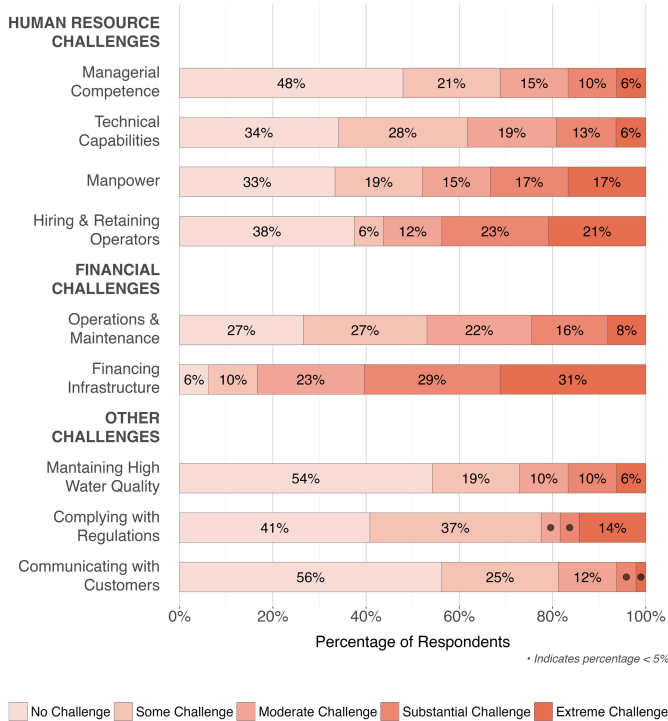


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



NORTH DAKOTA

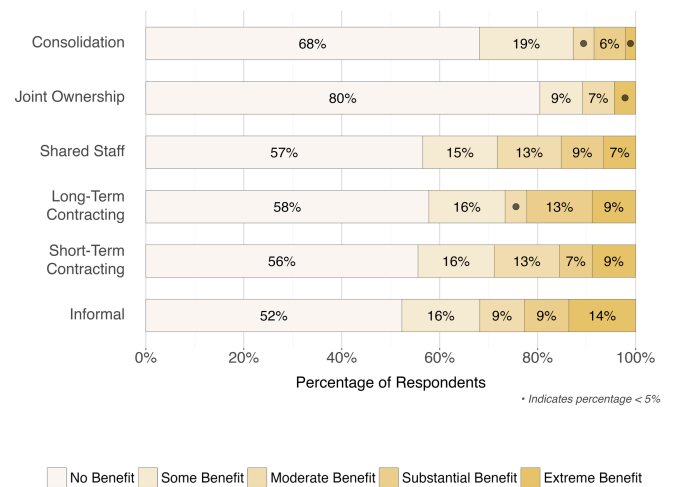
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



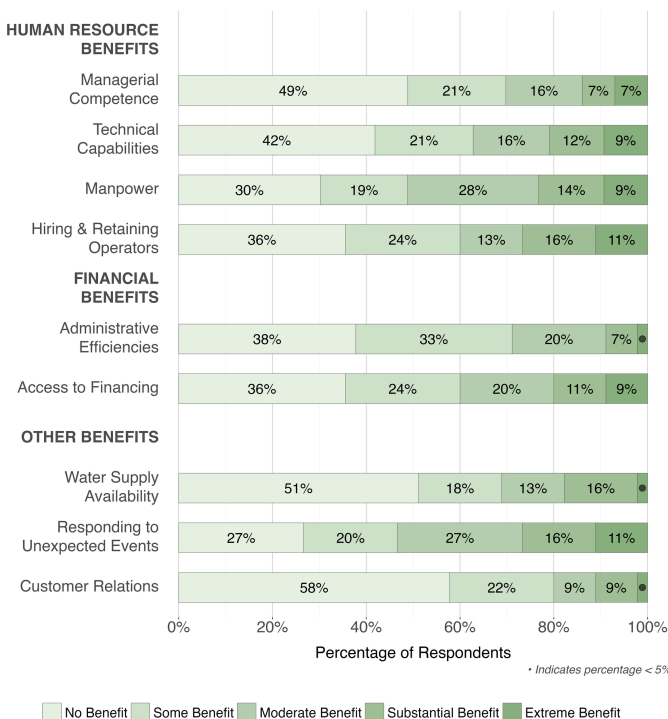
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	55	298	18%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	45	237	19%
Private	4	59	17%
Community	6		
Other	0	2	0%

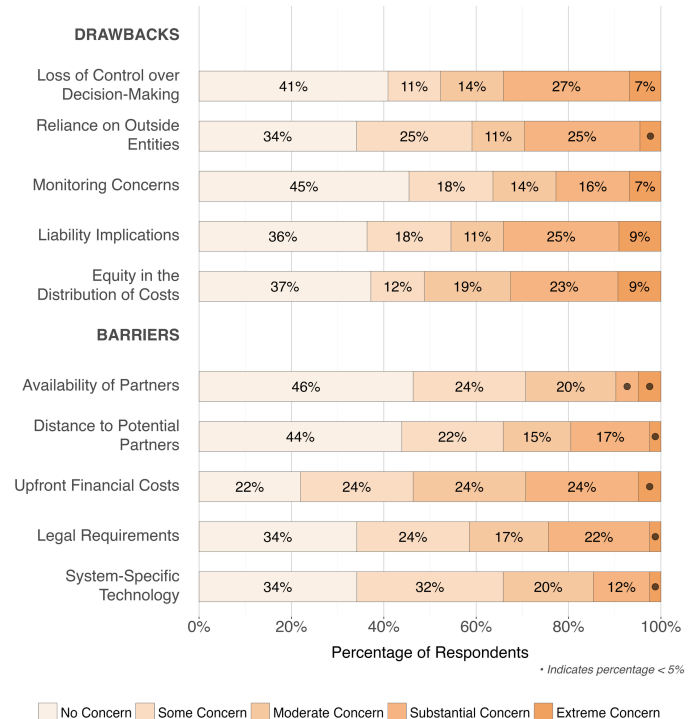
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

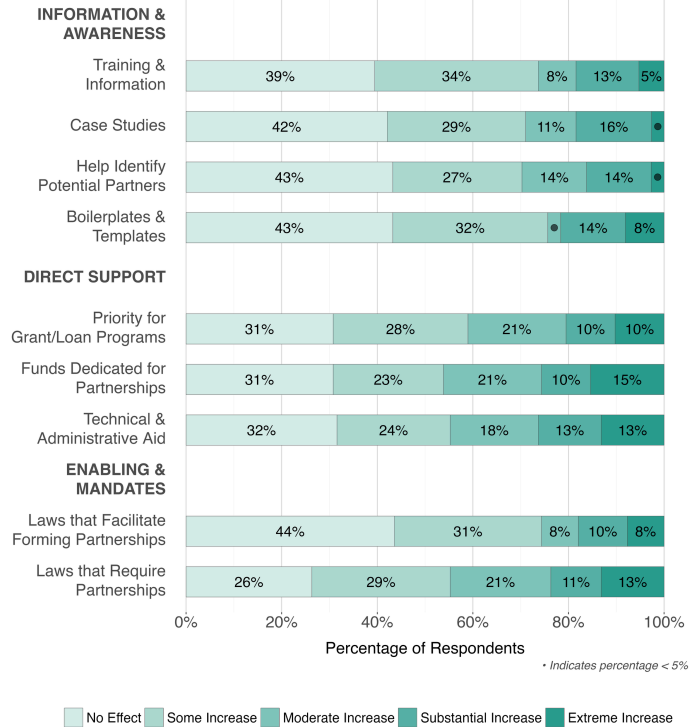


NORTH DAKOTA

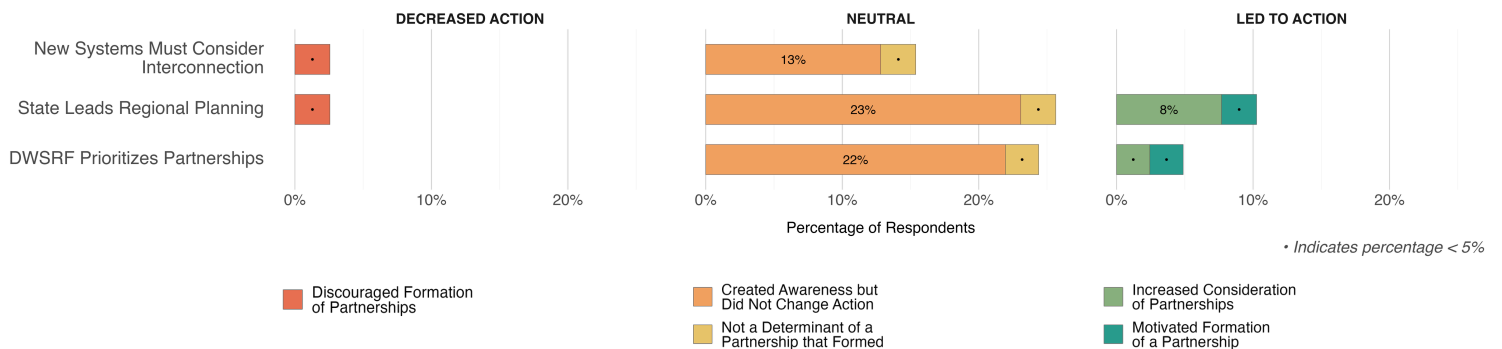
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	12%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	7%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	10%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	27%
Short-Term Contracting	2%	0%	15%
Informal	3%	0%	19%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

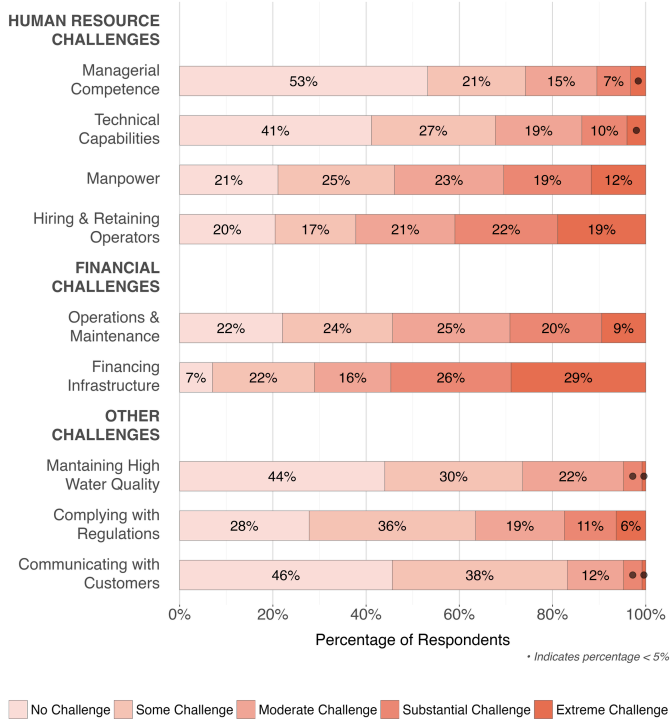


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





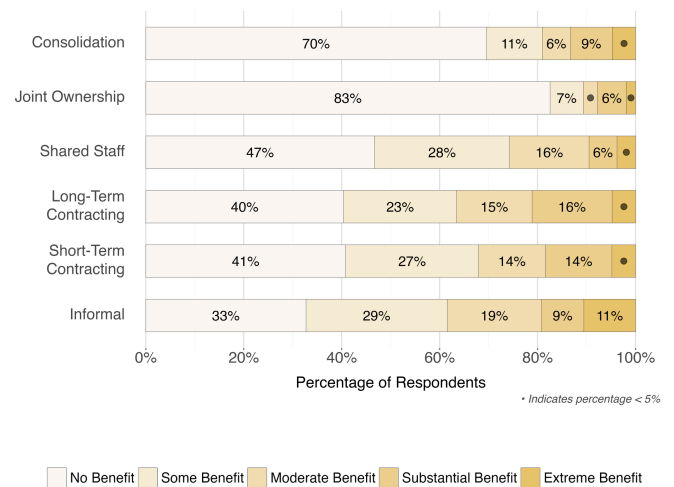
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



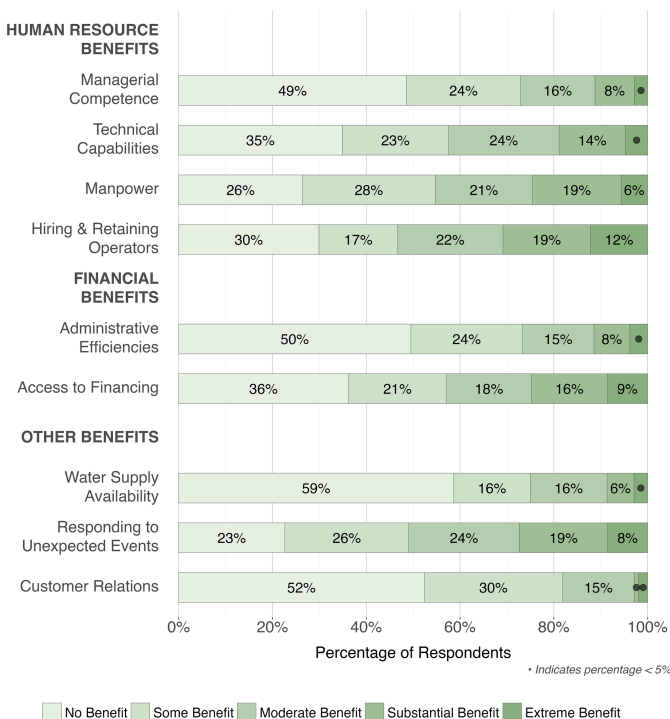
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	143	991	14%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	102	514	20%
Private	25	469	9%
Community	16		
Other	0	8	0%

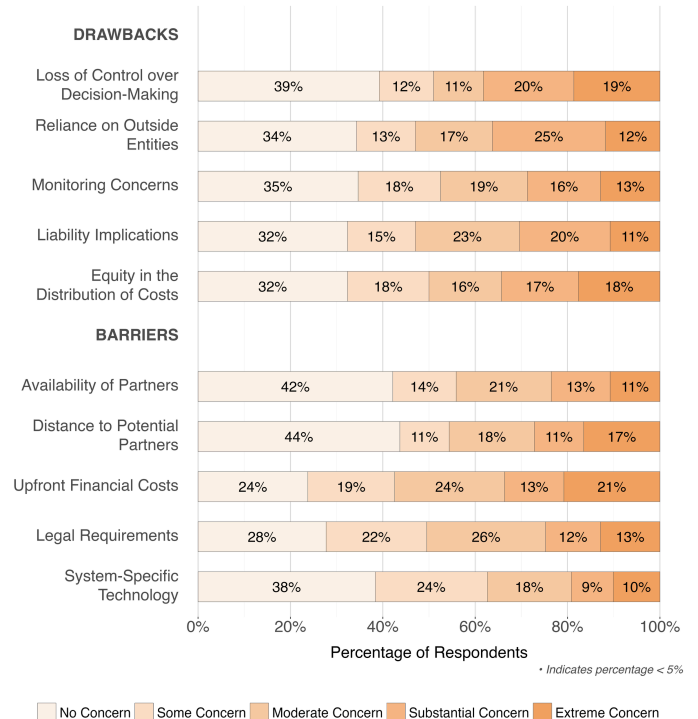
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

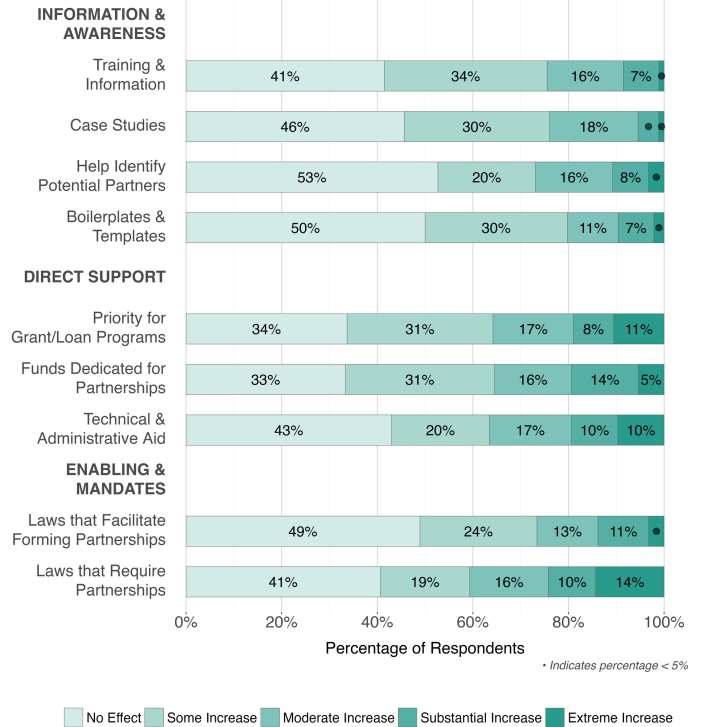




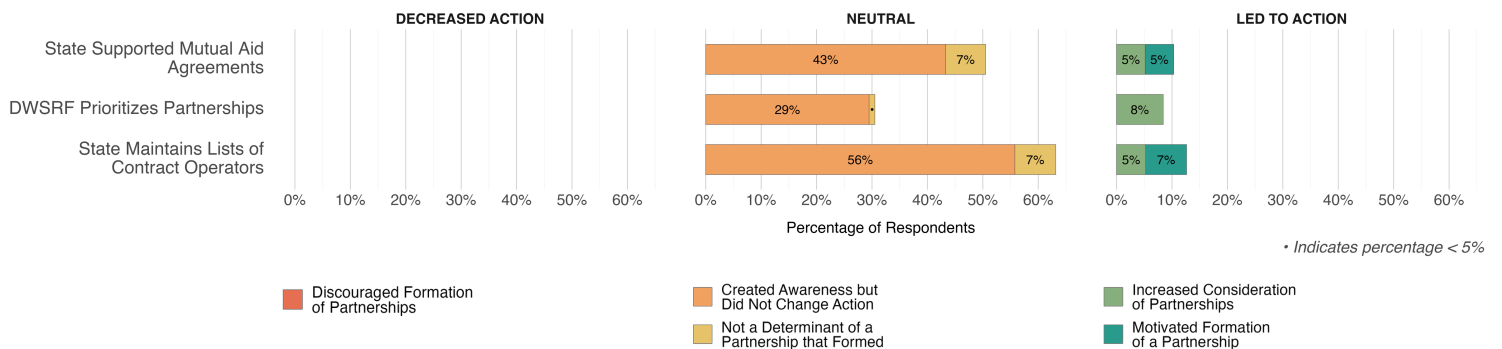
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	2%	1%	6%
Joint Ownership	0%	1%	5%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	14%
Long-Term Contracting	4%	1%	34%
Short-Term Contracting	7%	1%	32%
Informal	3%	0%	31%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

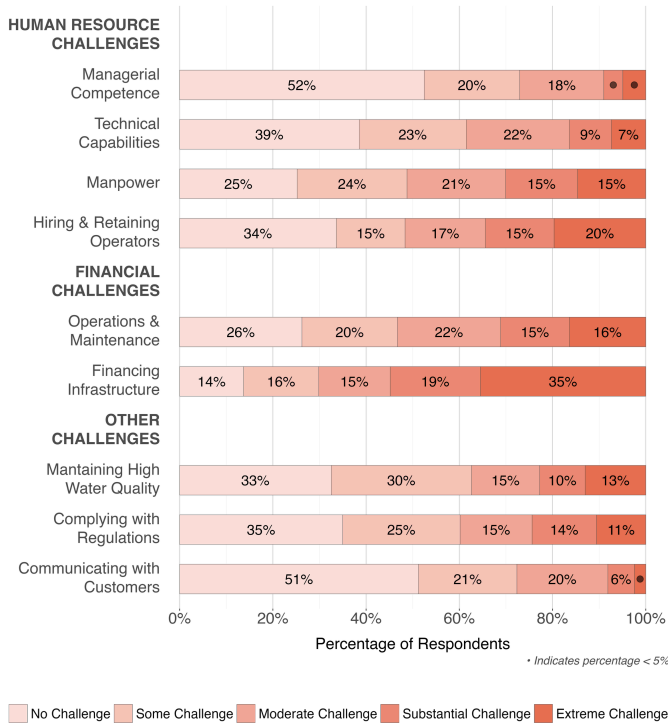


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



OKLAHOMA

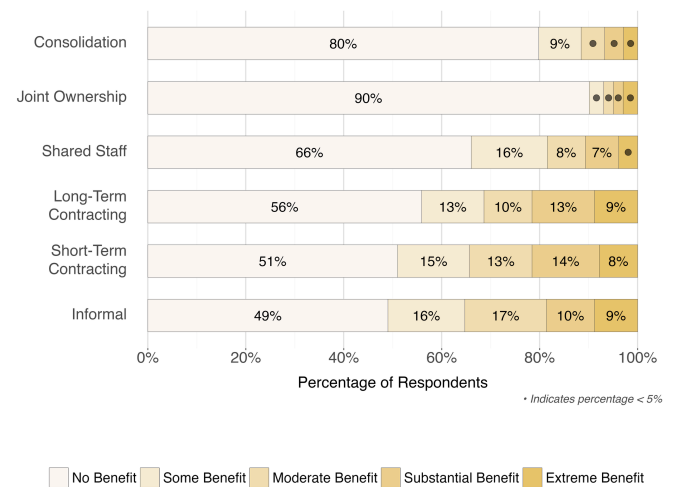
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



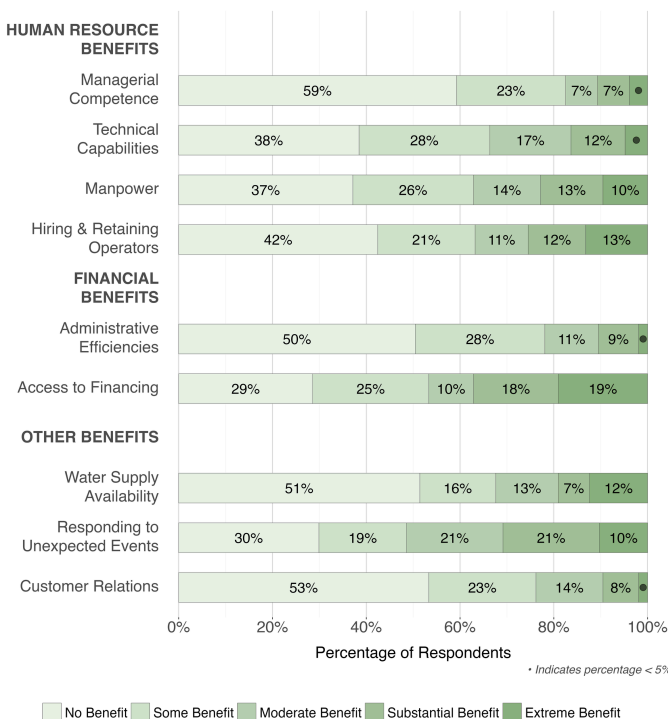
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	133	842	16%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	107	698	15%
Private	9	128	20%
Community	16		
Other	1	16	6%

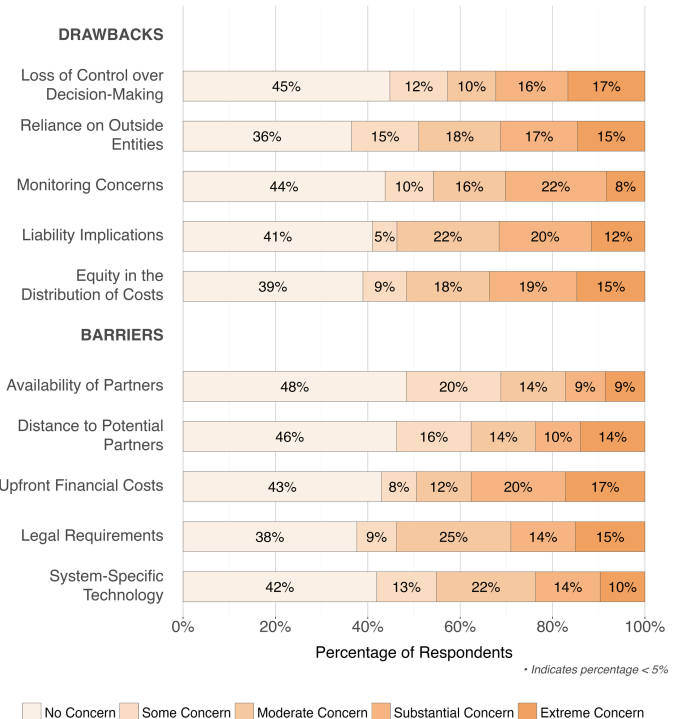
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

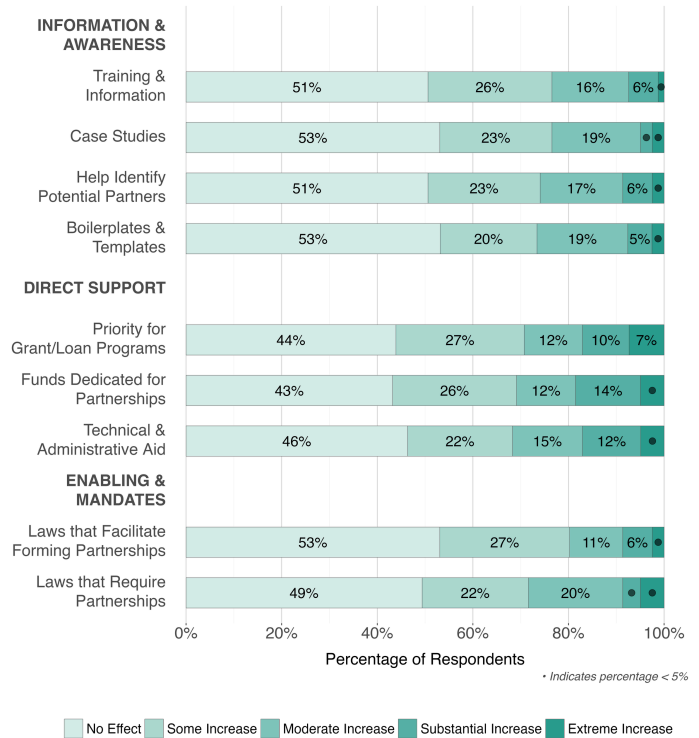


OKLAHOMA

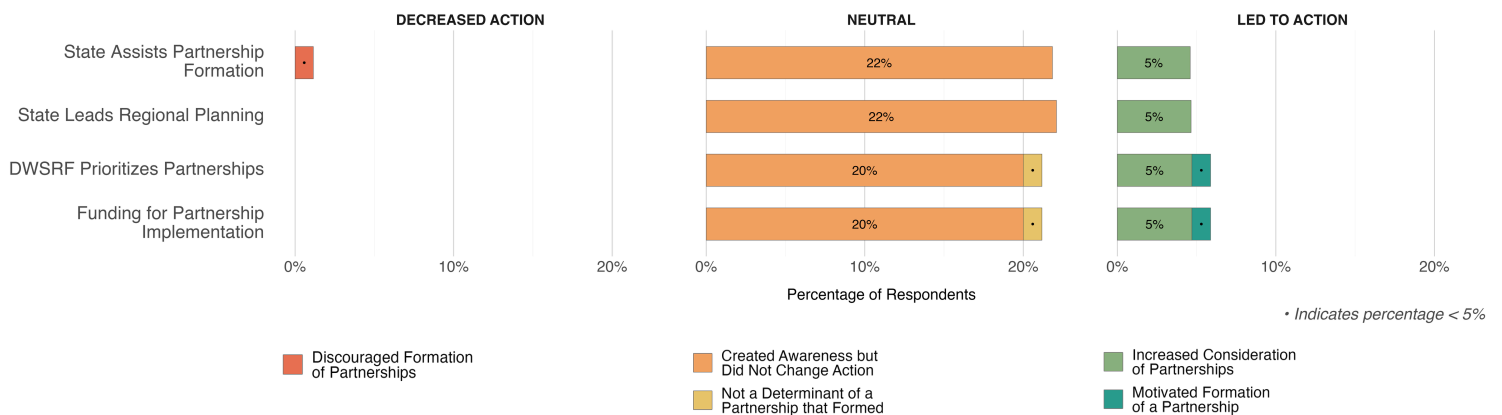
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	6%
Joint Ownership	2%	0%	4%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	31%
Short-Term Contracting	5%	1%	22%
Informal	2%	0%	37%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

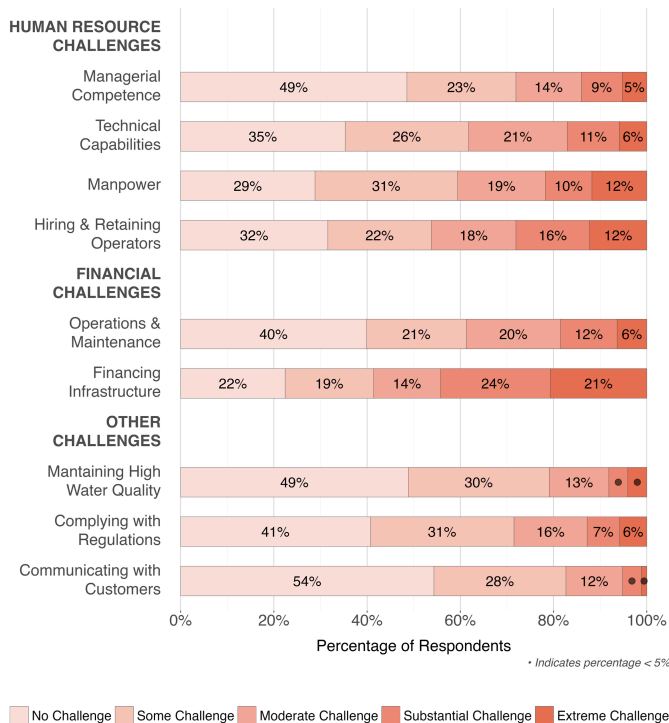


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



OREGON

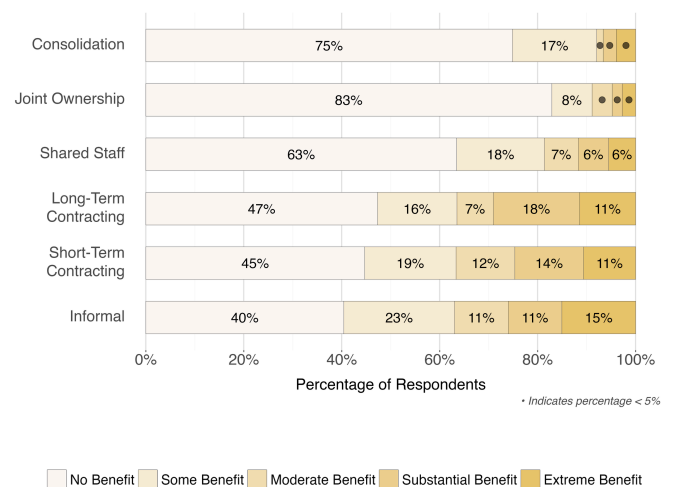
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



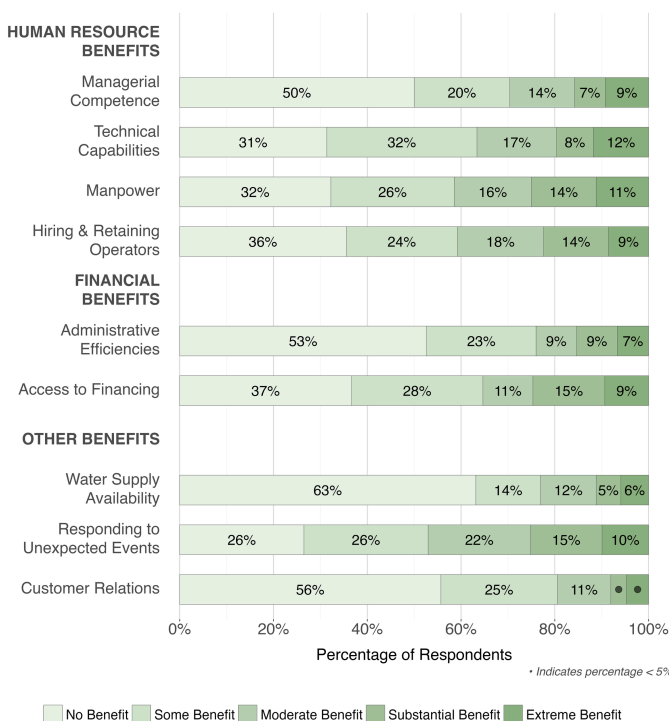
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	186	860	22%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	65	286	23%
Private	59	566	21%
Community	61		
Other	1	8	13%

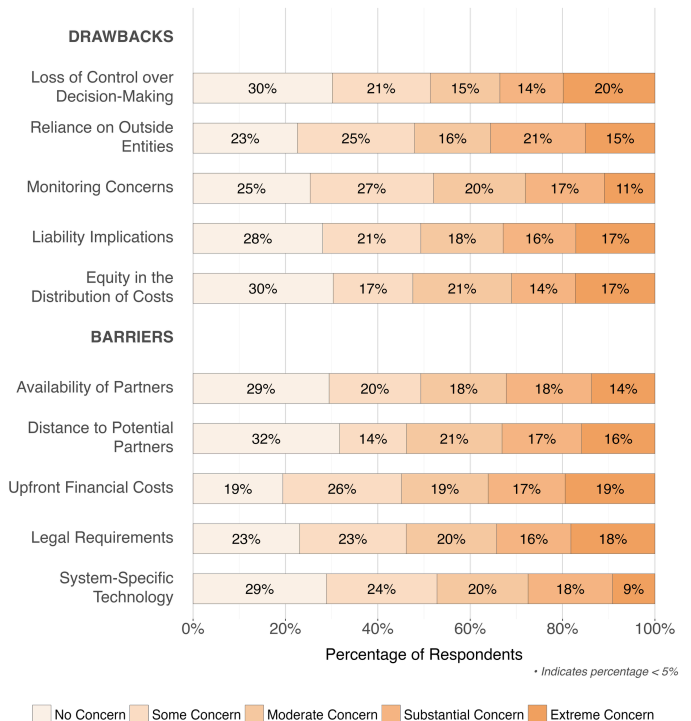
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

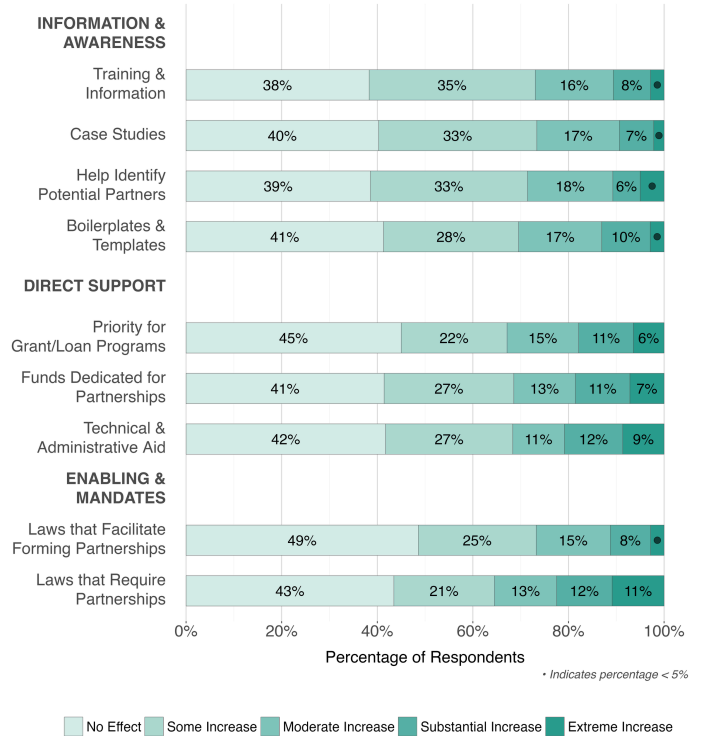




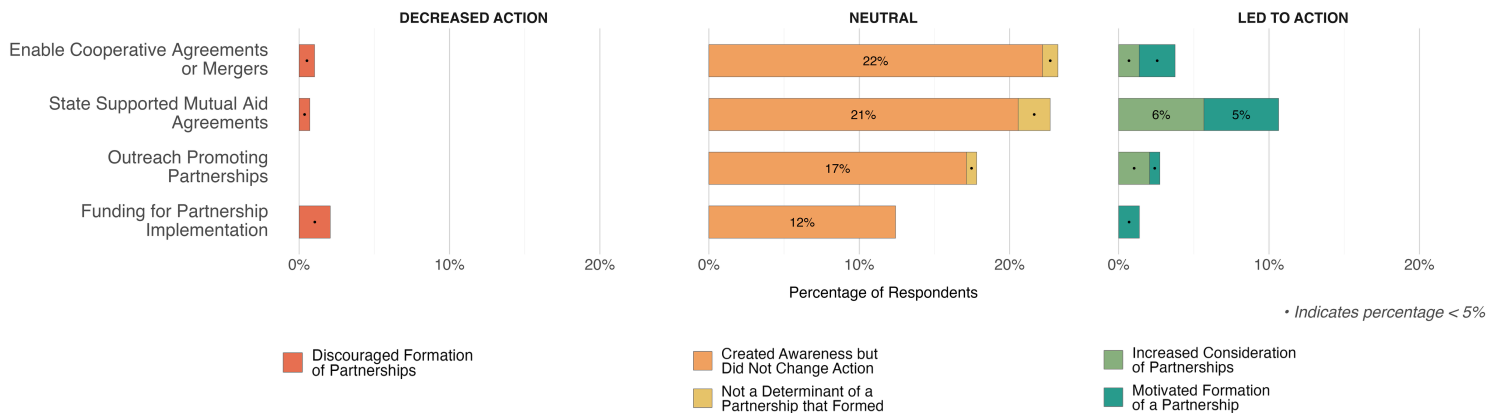
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	1%	6%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	2%	35%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	2%	29%
Informal	3%	0%	22%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

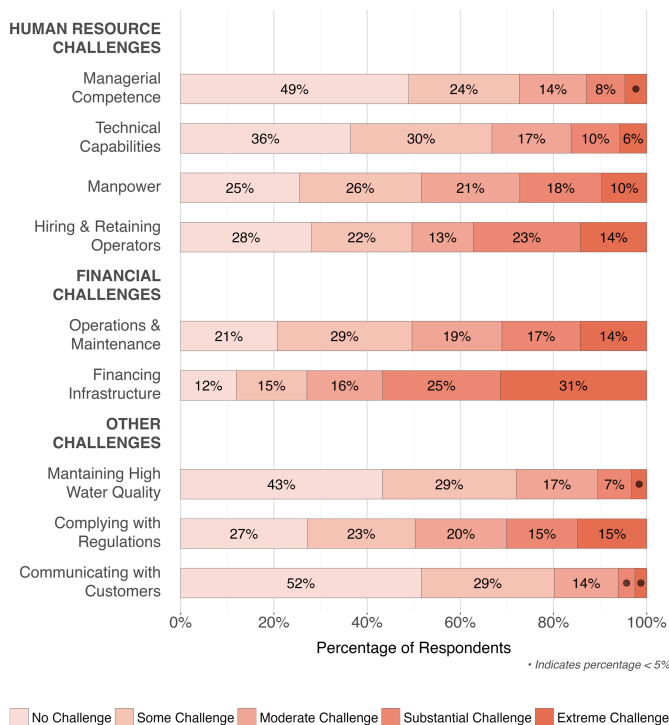


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



PENNSYLVANIA

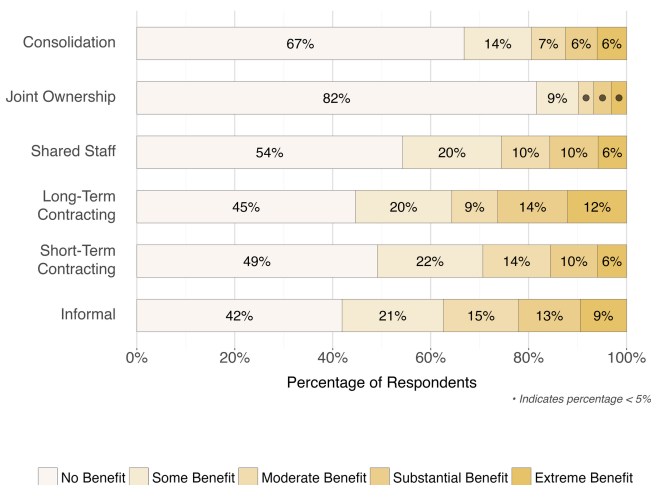
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



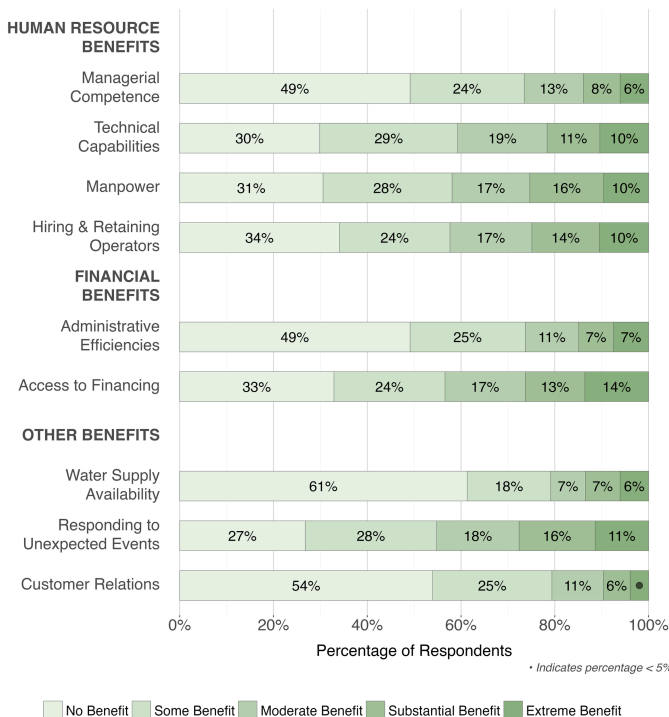
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	307	1744	18%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	155	623	25%
Private	97	1028	14%
Community	43		
Other	12	93	13%

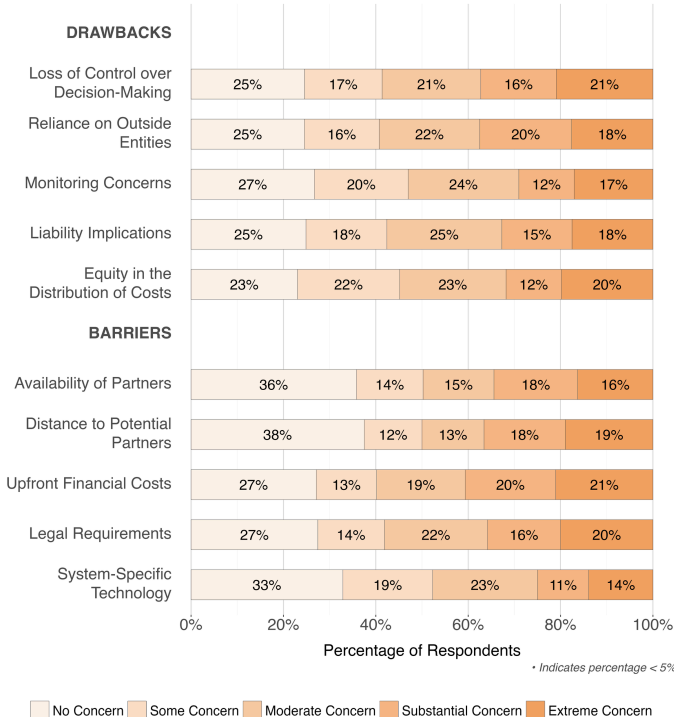
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

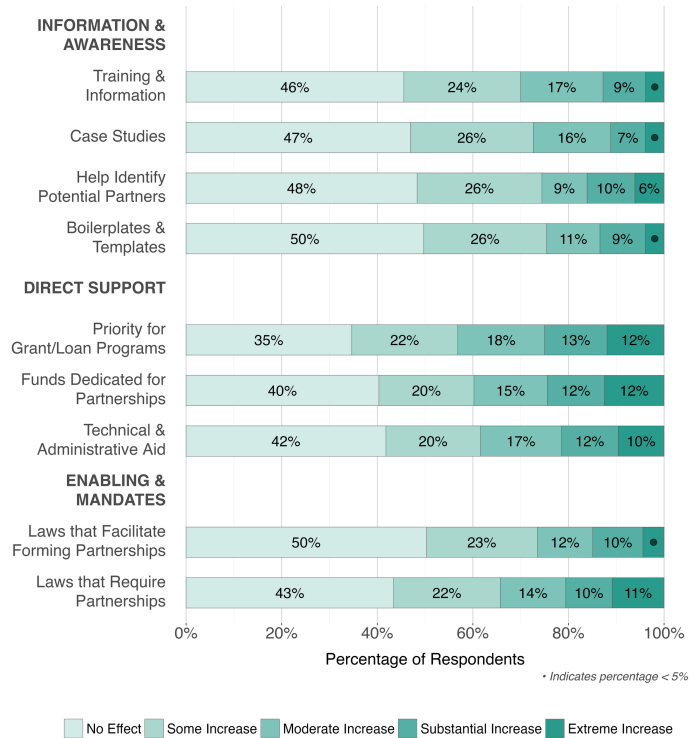


PENNSYLVANIA

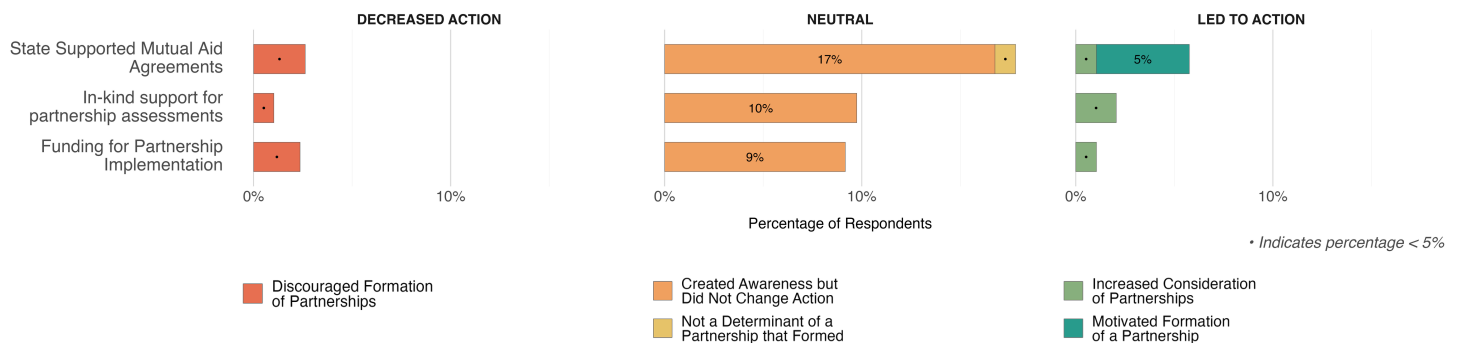
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	2%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	1%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	0%	36%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	0%	15%
Informal	2%	0%	18%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

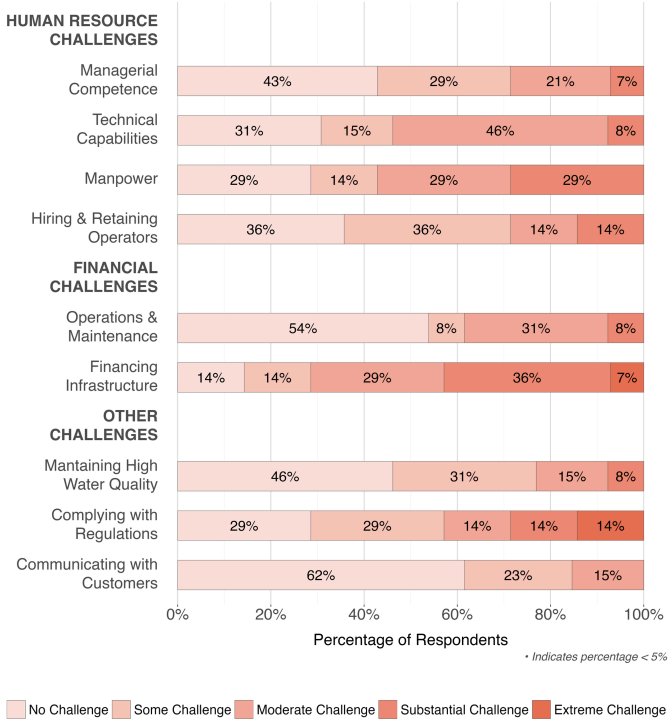


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



RHODE ISLAND

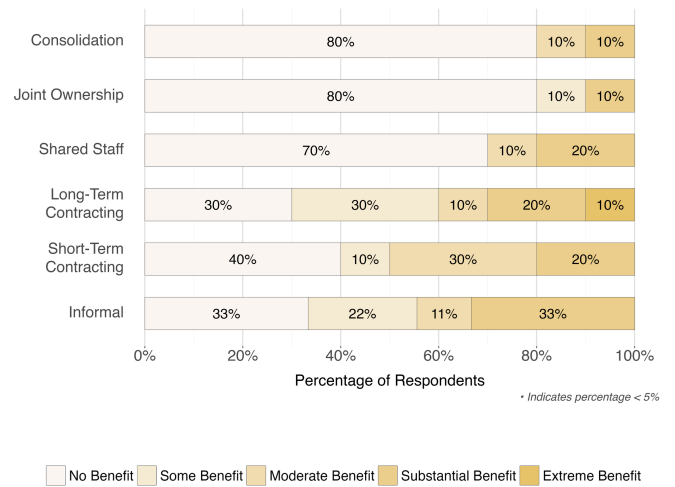
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



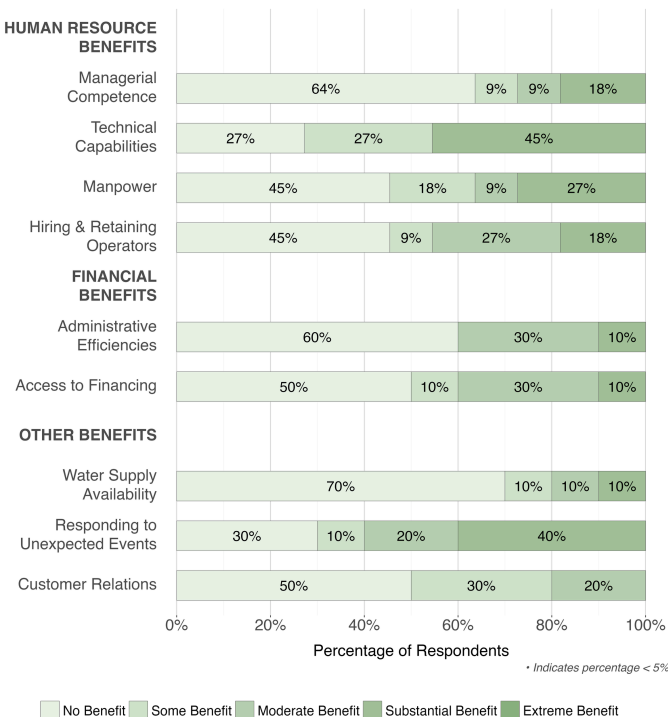
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	17	74	23%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	7	25	28%
Private	8	43	23%
Community	2		
Other	0	6	0%

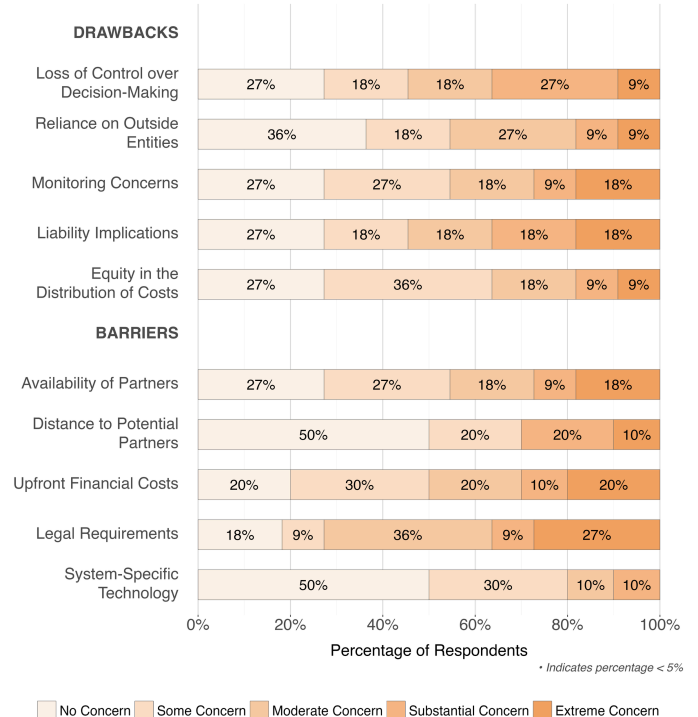
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

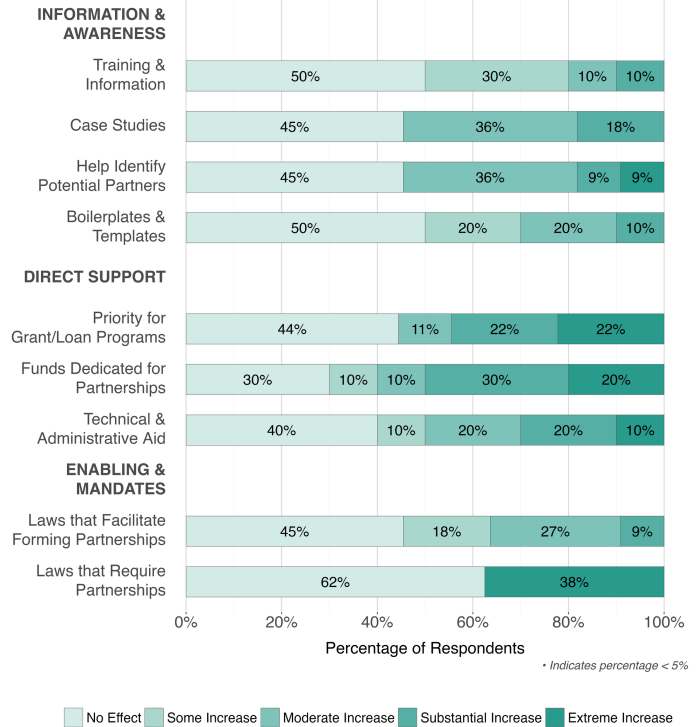


RHODE ISLAND

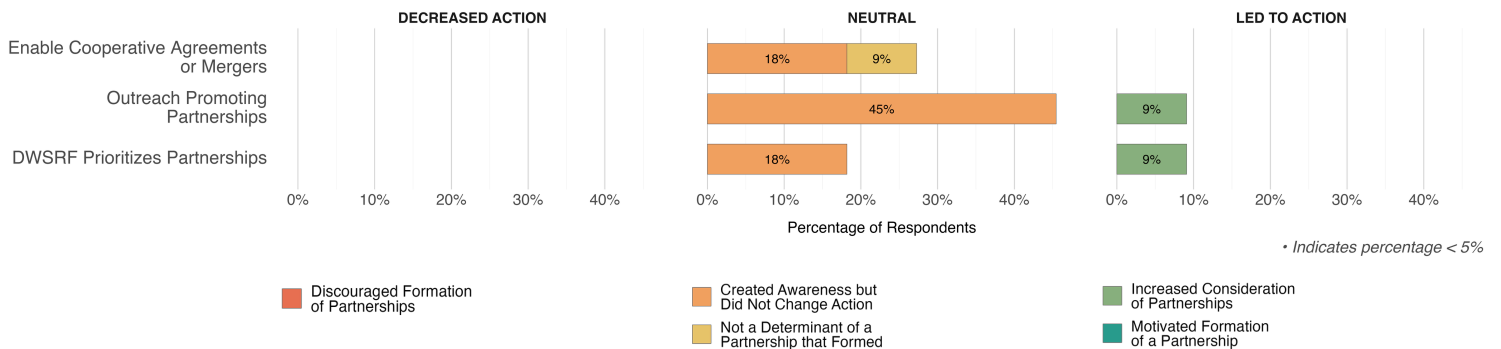
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	8%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	8%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	38%
Short-Term Contracting	8%	0%	46%
Informal	0%	0%	45%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

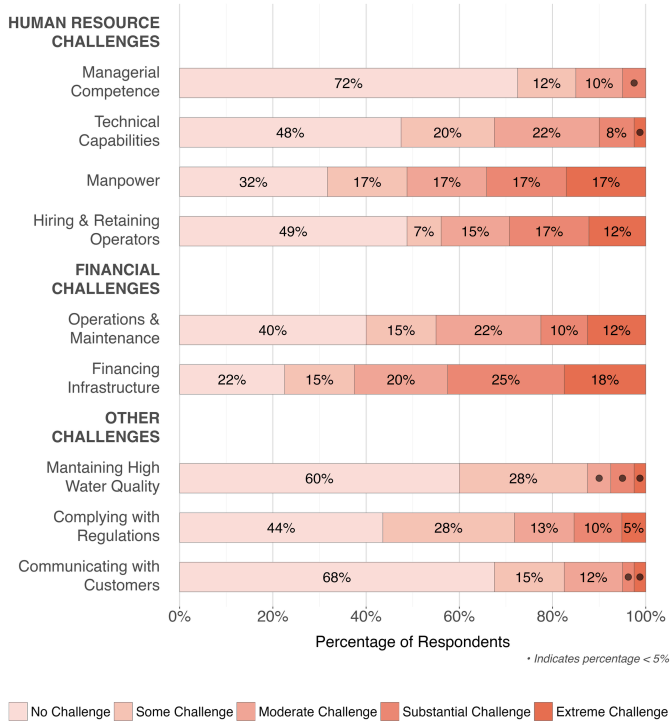


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



SOUTH CAROLINA

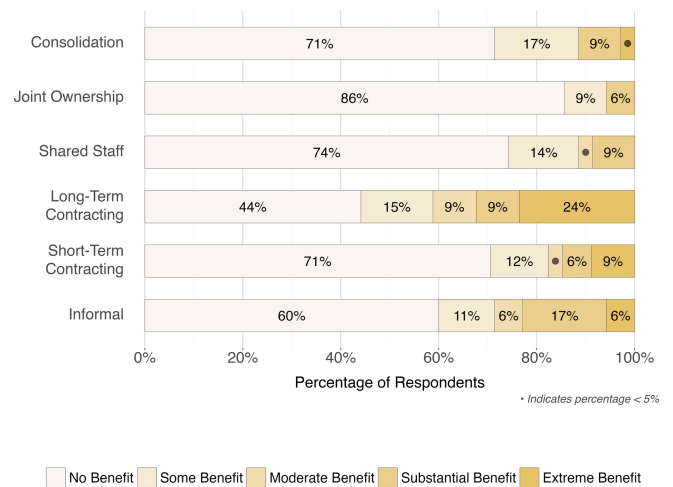
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



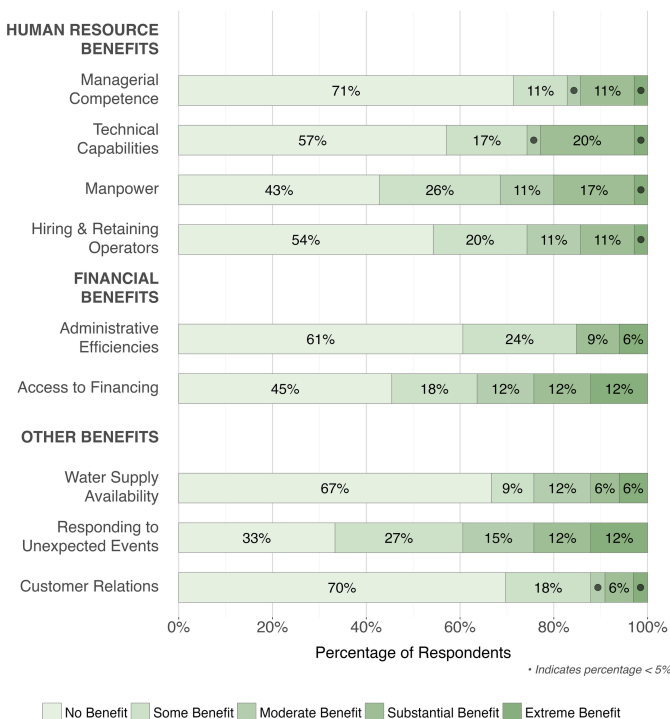
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	45	496	9%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	19	206	9%
Private	18	284	9%
Community	7		
Other	1	6	17%

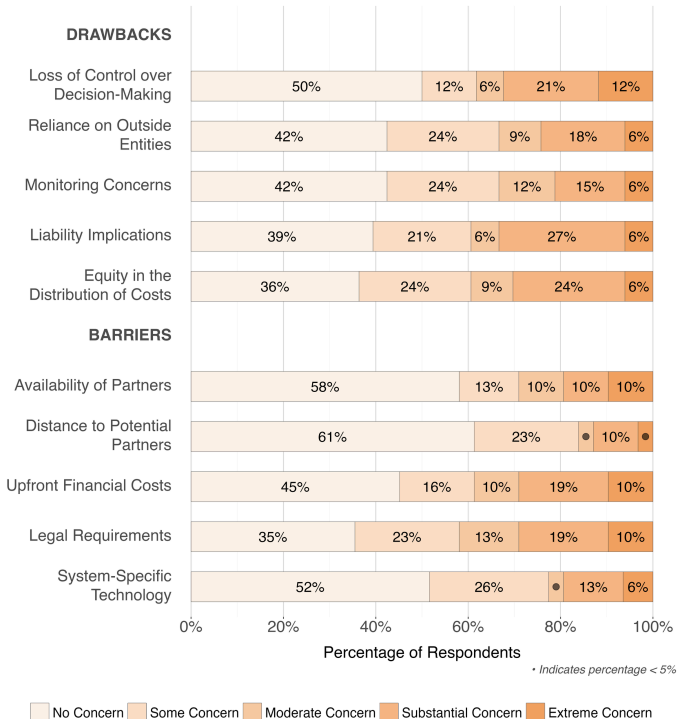
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

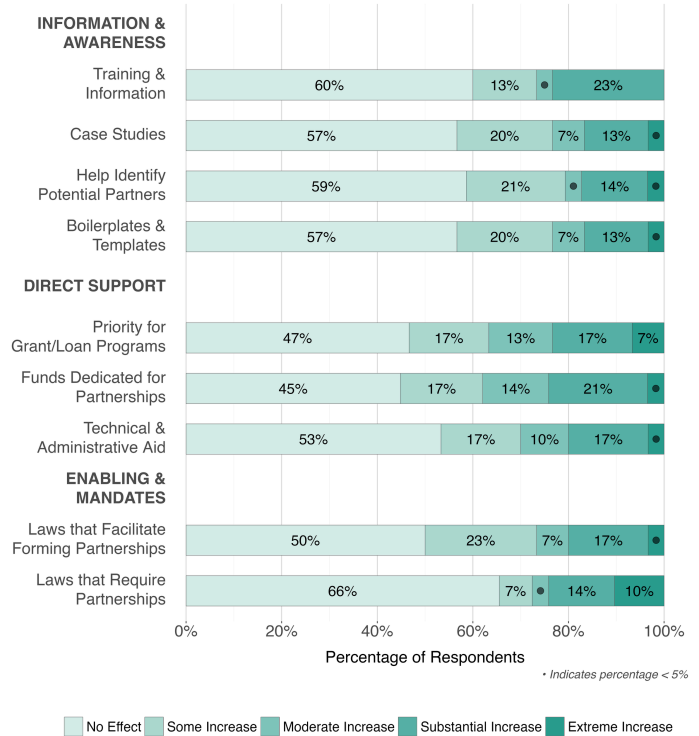


SOUTH CAROLINA

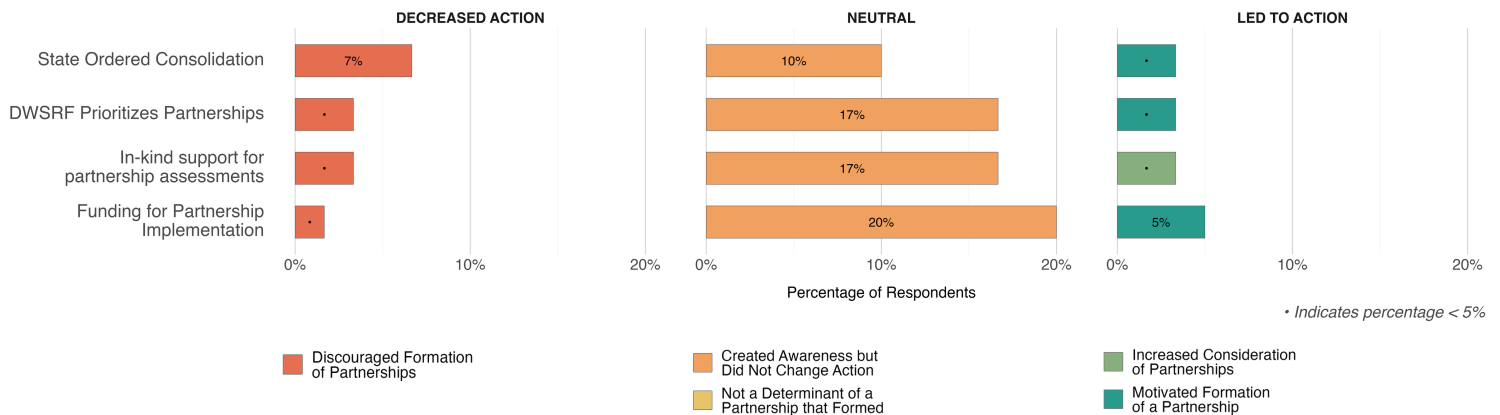
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	3%	6%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	0%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	0%	39%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	0%	19%
Informal	0%	0%	21%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

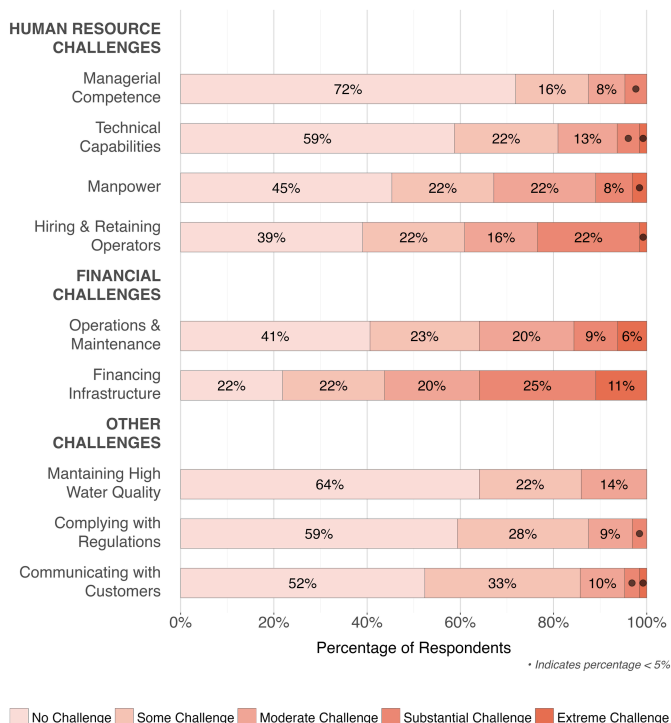


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



SOUTH DAKOTA

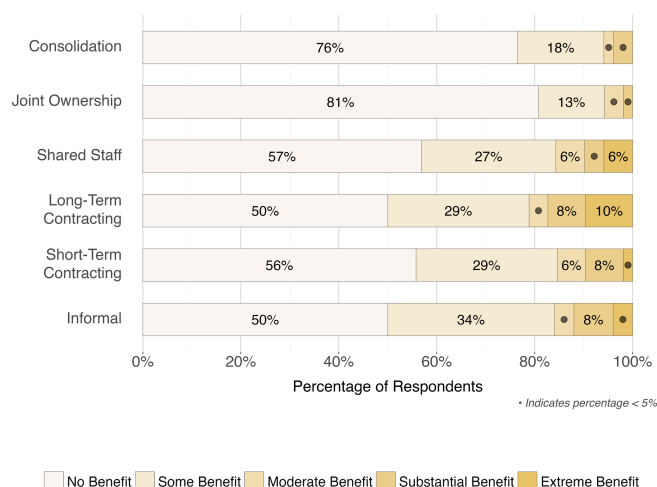
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



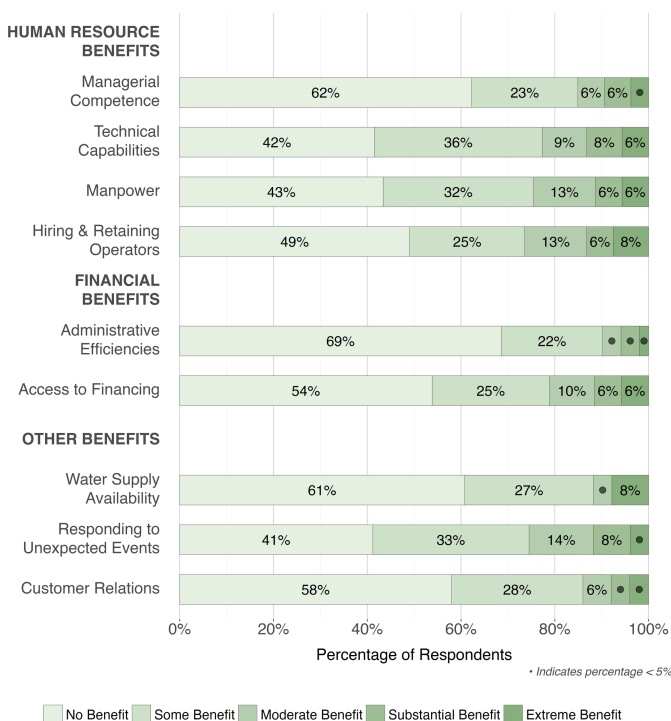
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	68	444	15%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	39	218	18%
Private	11	223	13%
Community	17		
Other	1	3	33%

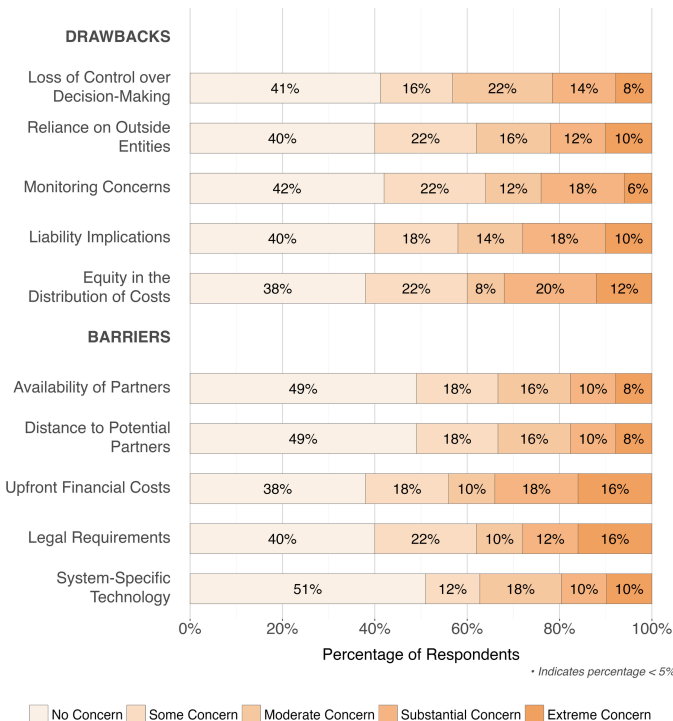
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

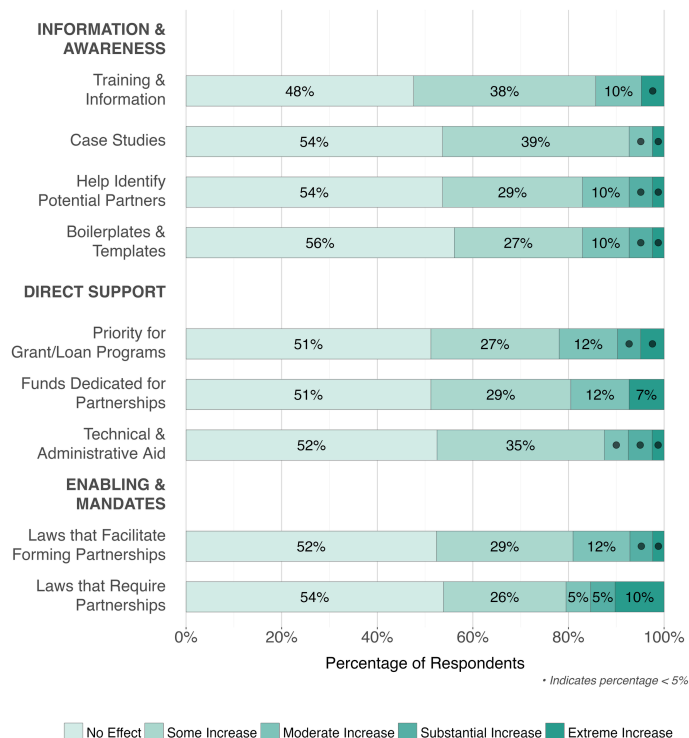


SOUTH DAKOTA

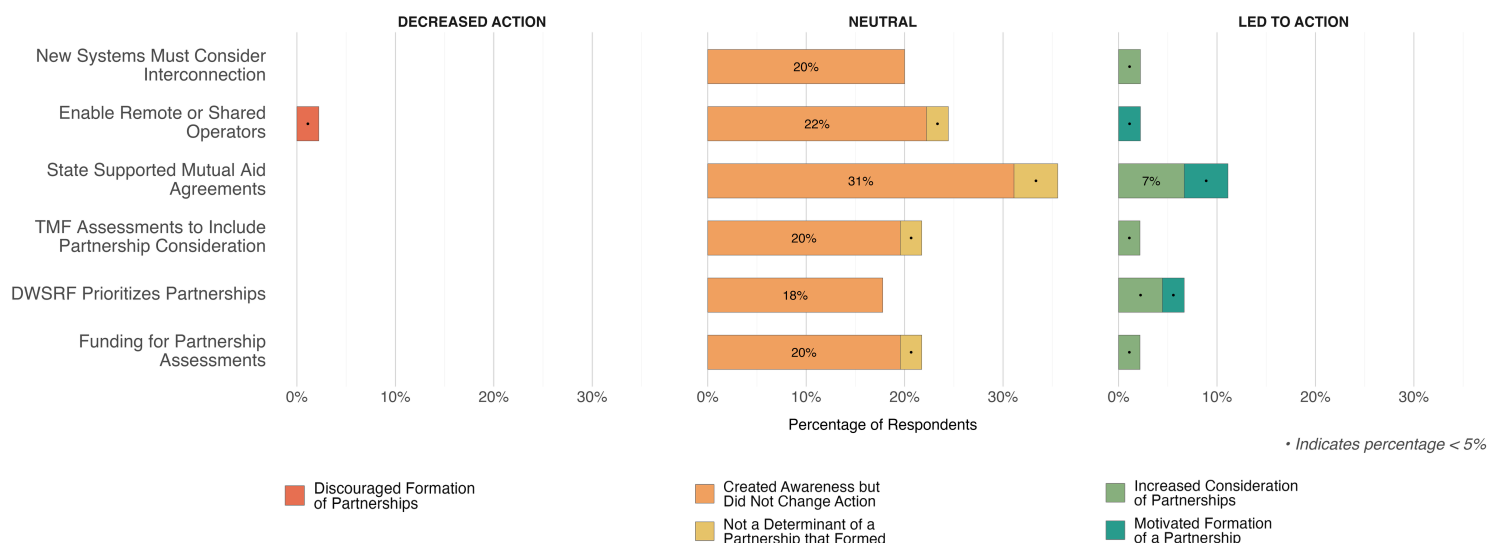
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	12%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	8%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	10%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	22%
Short-Term Contracting	2%	0%	15%
Informal	0%	0%	20%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

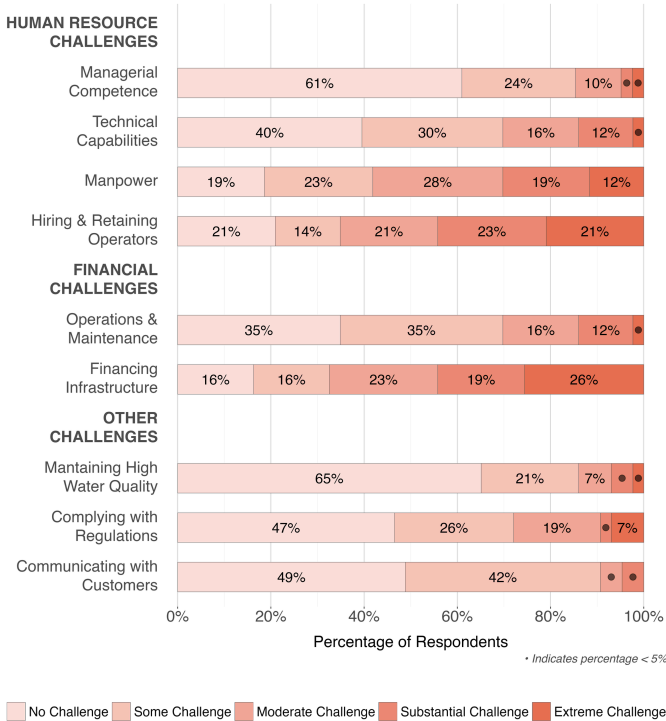


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



TENNESSEE

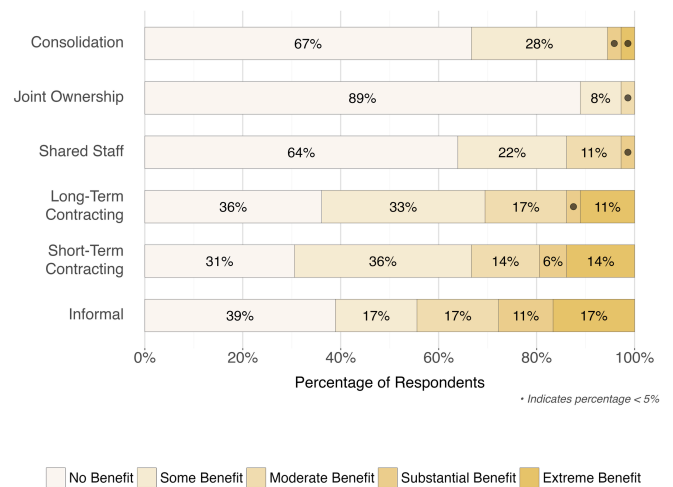
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



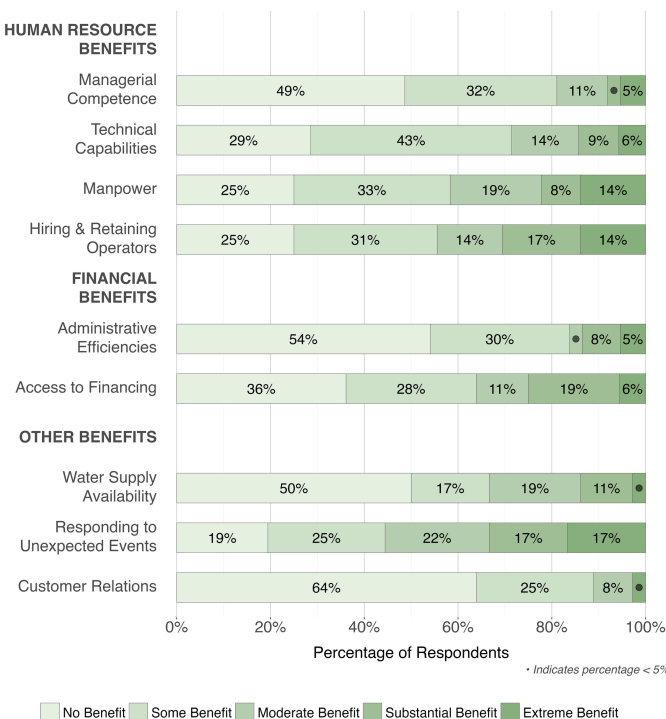
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	45	313	14%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	36	272	13%
Private	4	37	24%
Community	5		
Other	0	4	0%

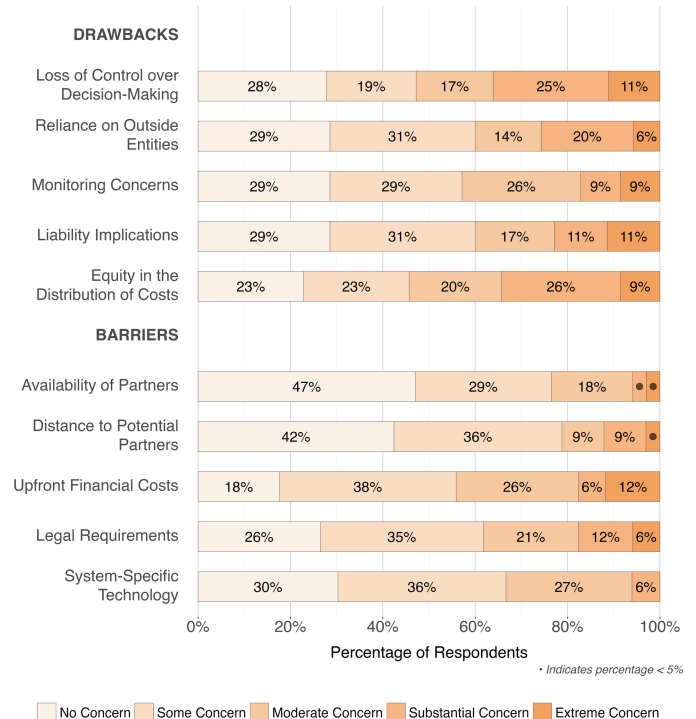
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

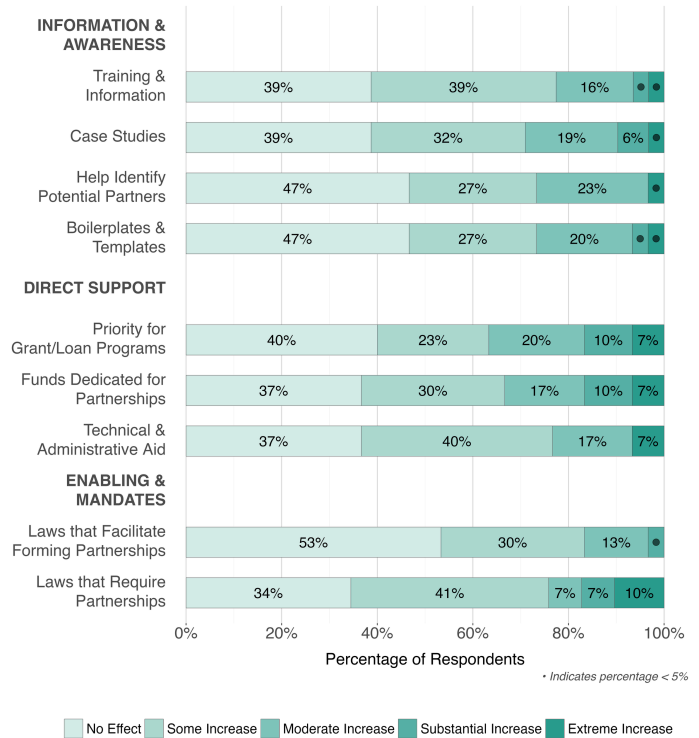


TENNESSEE

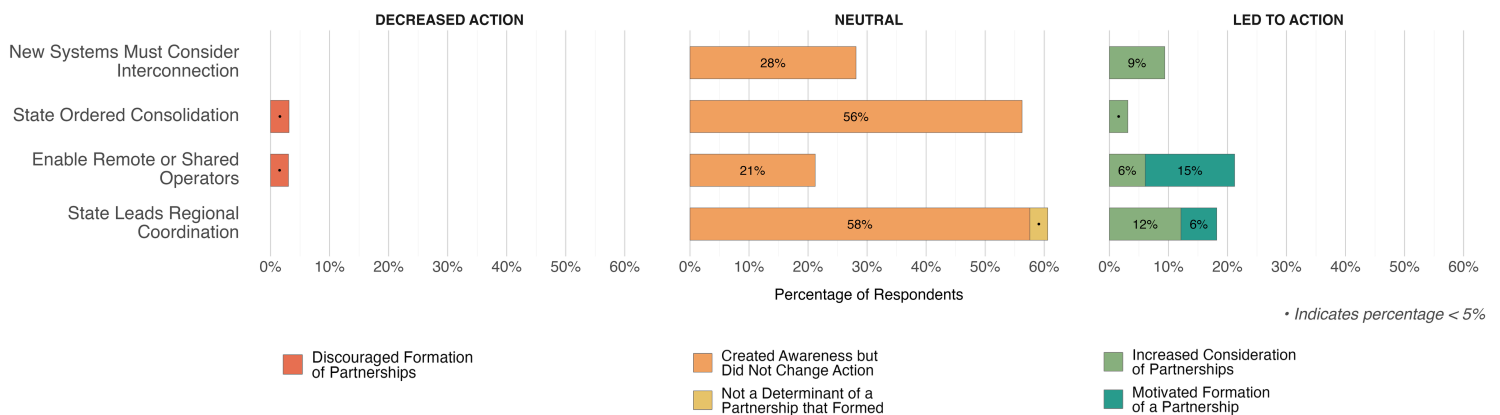
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	3%	8%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	5%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	37%
Short-Term Contracting	3%	0%	31%
Informal	0%	0%	38%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

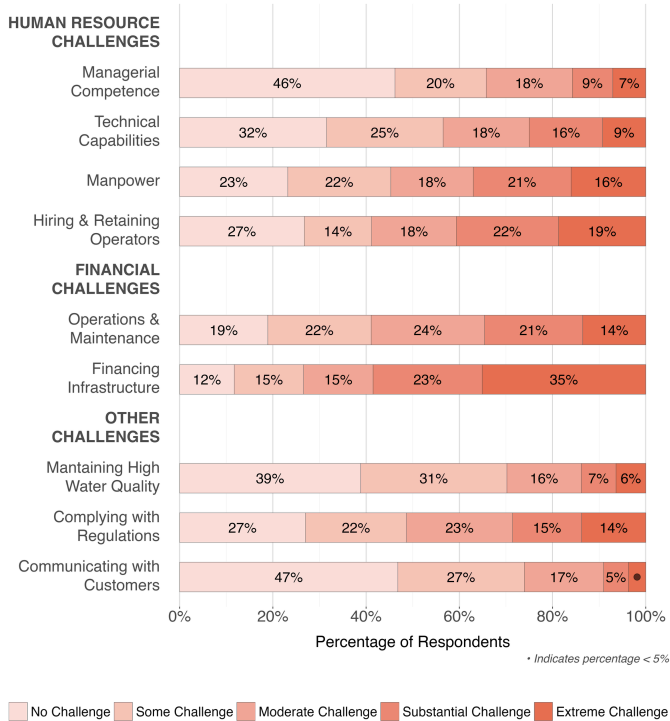


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





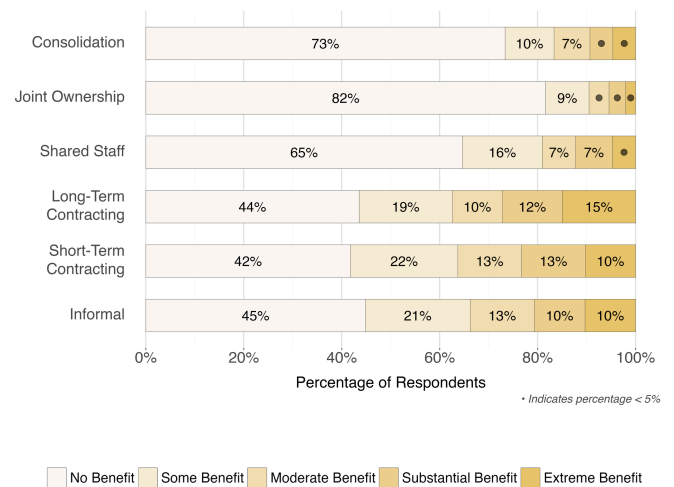
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



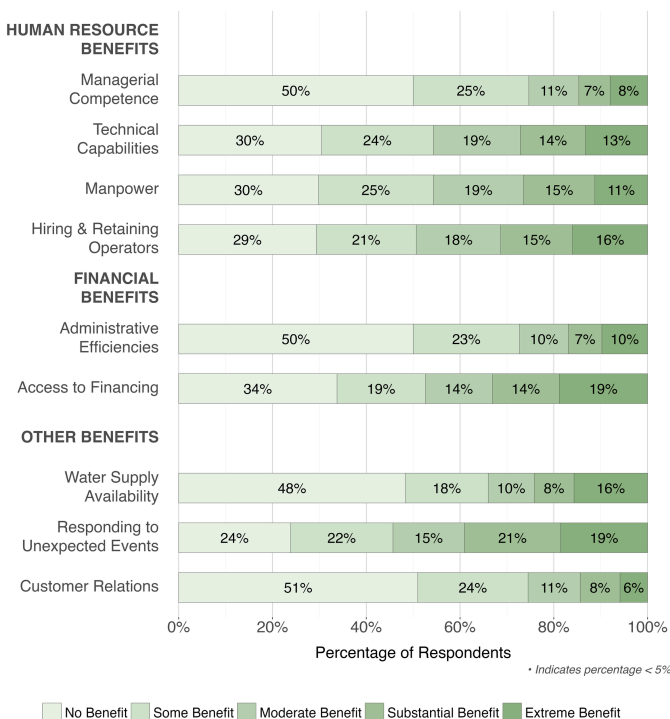
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	212	4256	5%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	95	2462	4%
Private	53	1761	7%
Community	63		
Other	1	33	3%

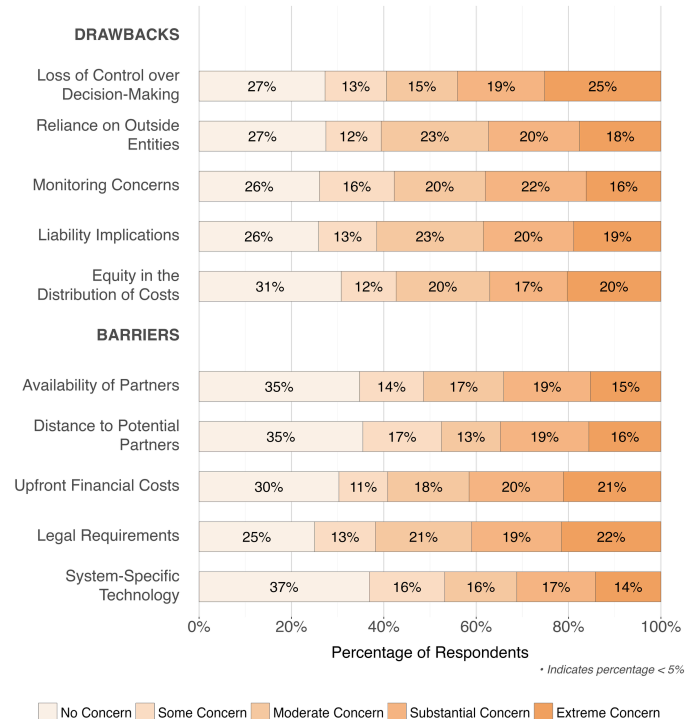
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

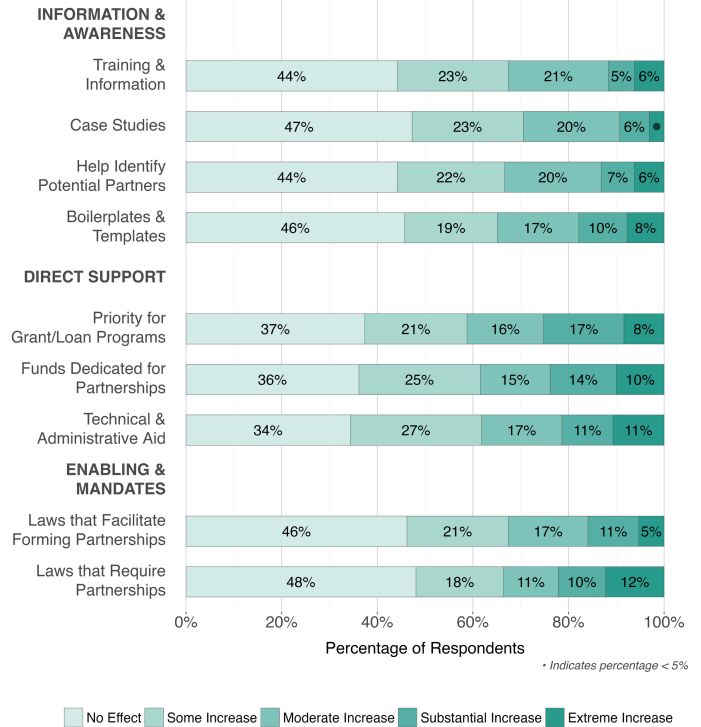




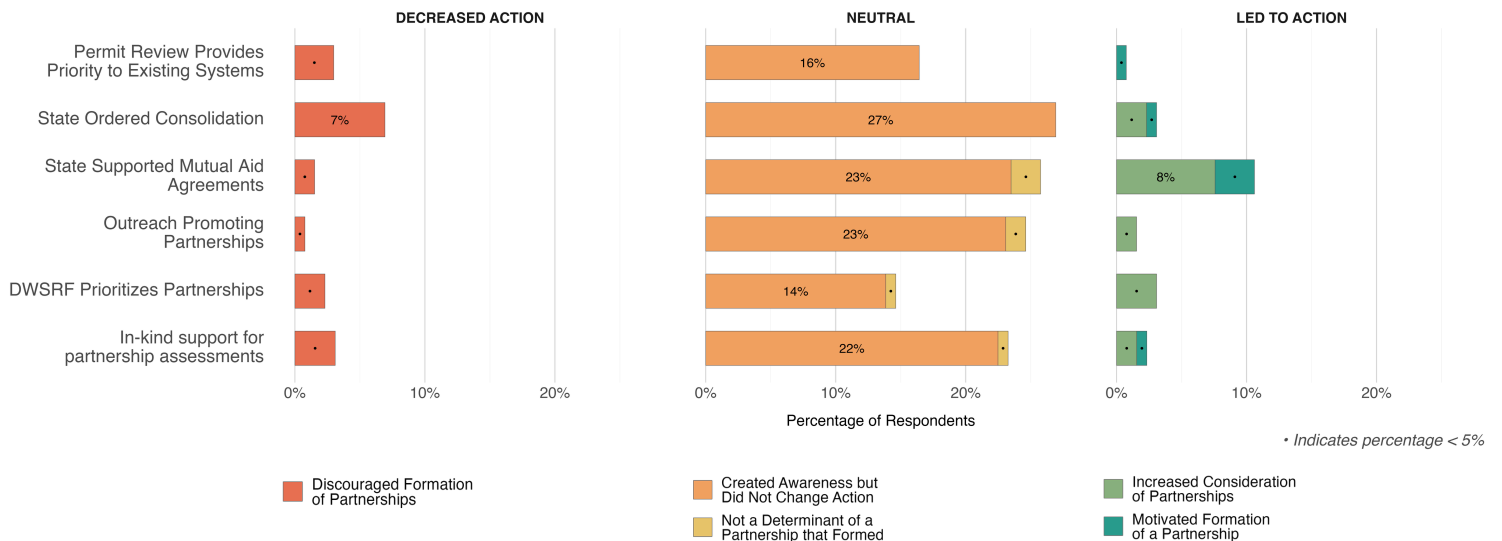
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	1%	7%
Joint Ownership	1%	0%	6%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	8%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	0%	35%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	1%	31%
Informal	2%	1%	20%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

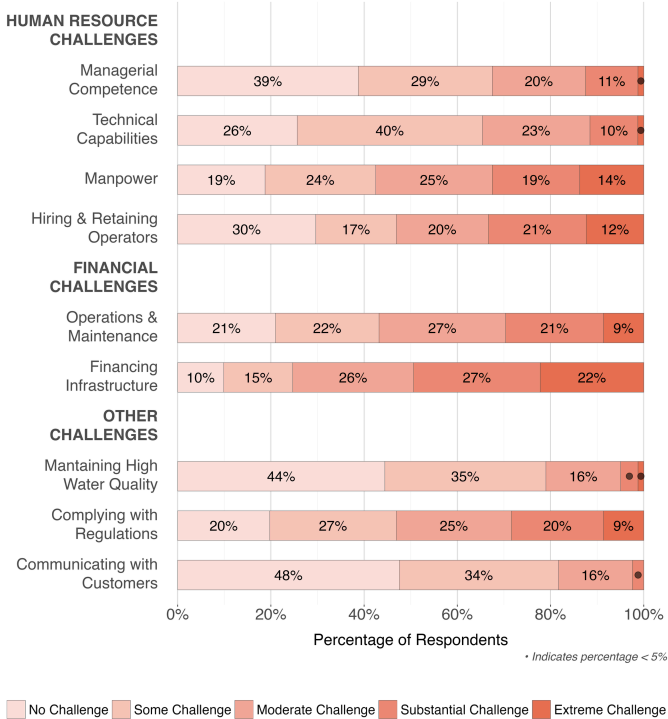


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



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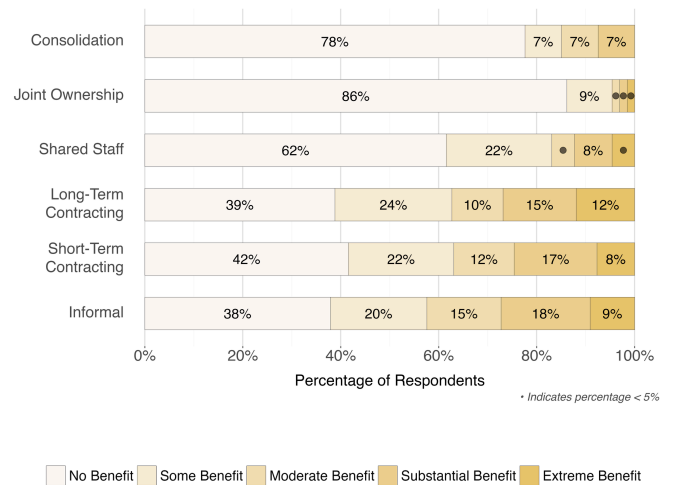
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



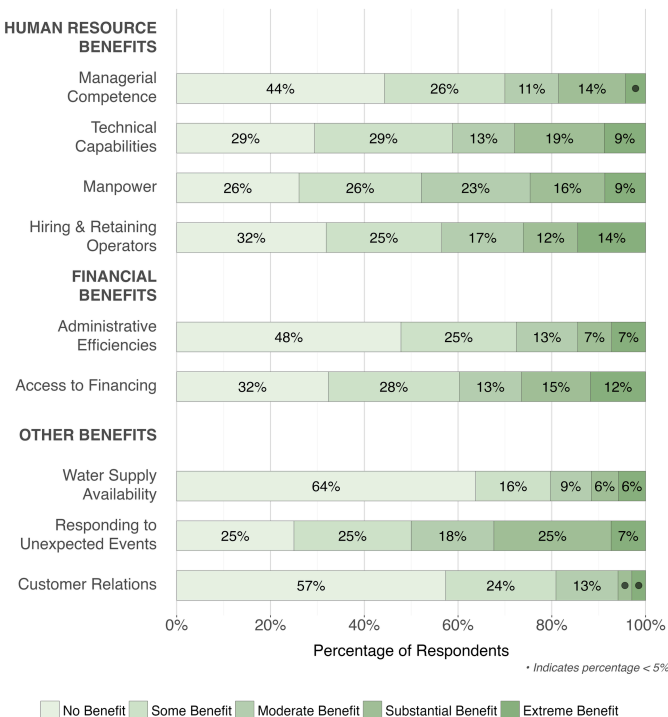
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	88	441	20%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	52	250	21%
Private	10	180	19%
Community	24		
Other	2	11	18%

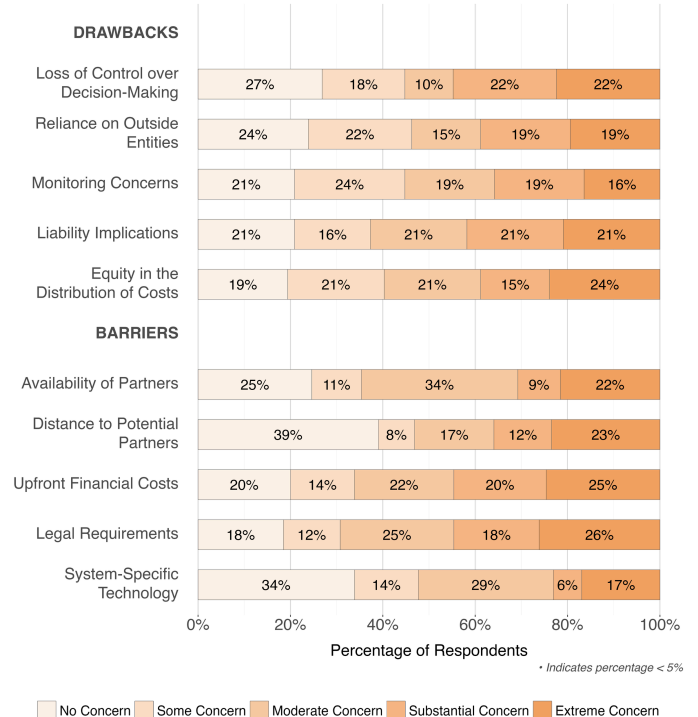
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

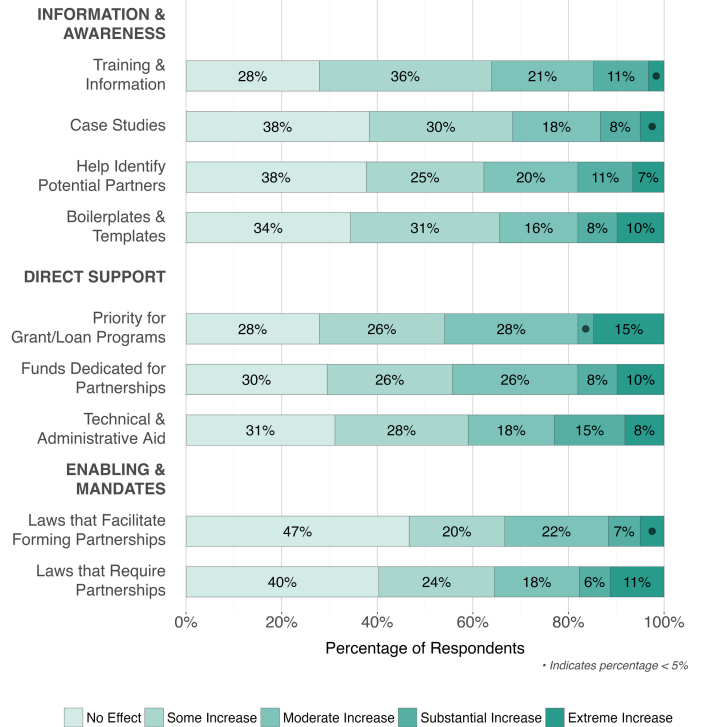




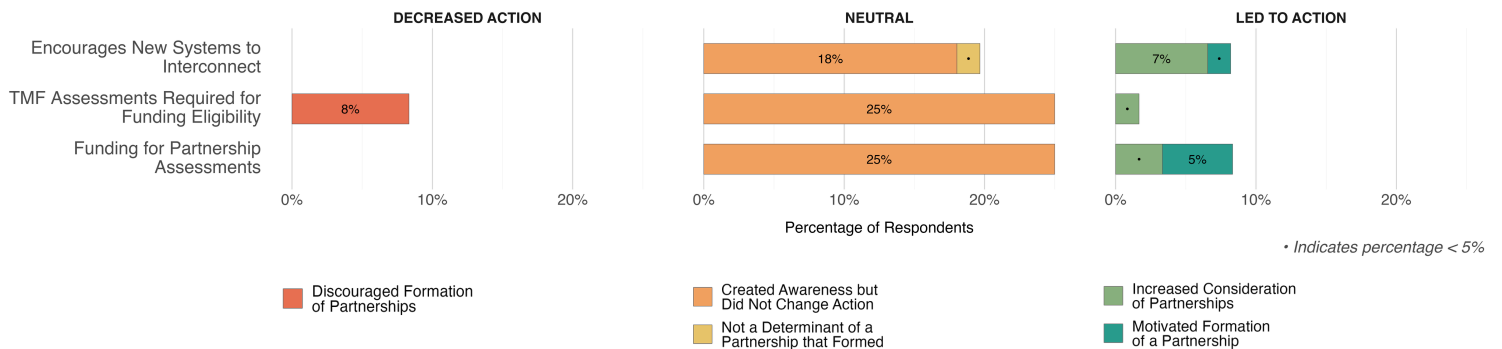
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	4%	5%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	8%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	9%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	0%	31%
Short-Term Contracting	10%	0%	23%
Informal	1%	0%	32%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

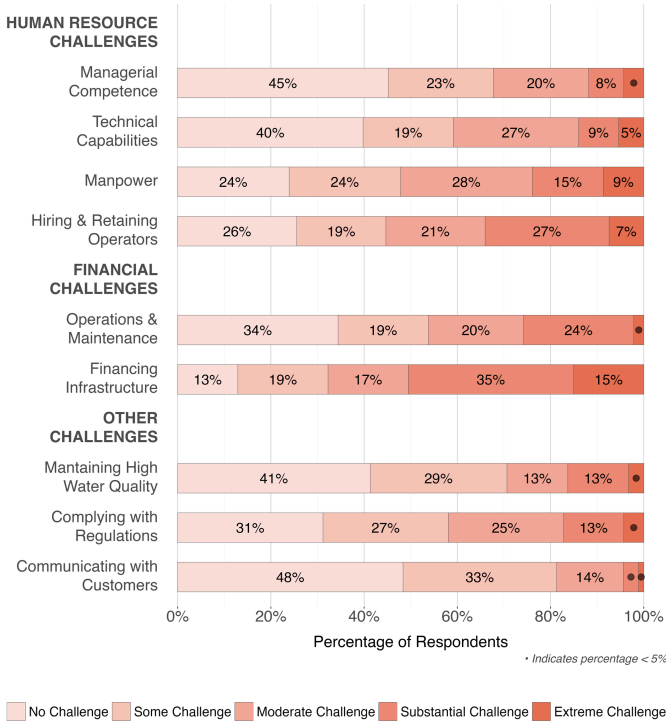


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



VERMONT

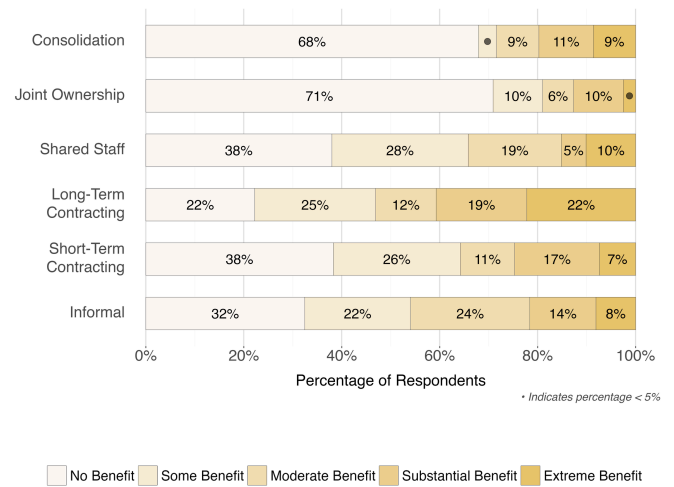
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



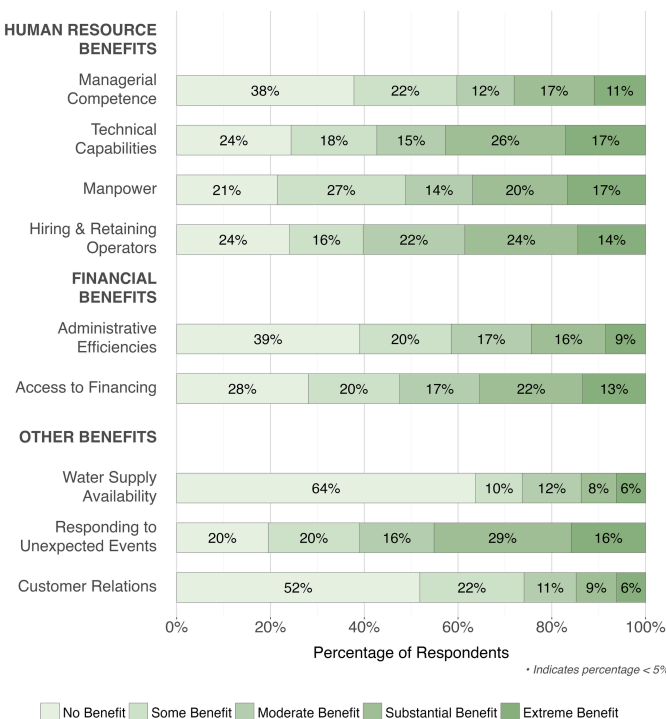
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	100	403	25%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	43	161	27%
Private	18	238	23%
Community	37		
Other	2	4	50%

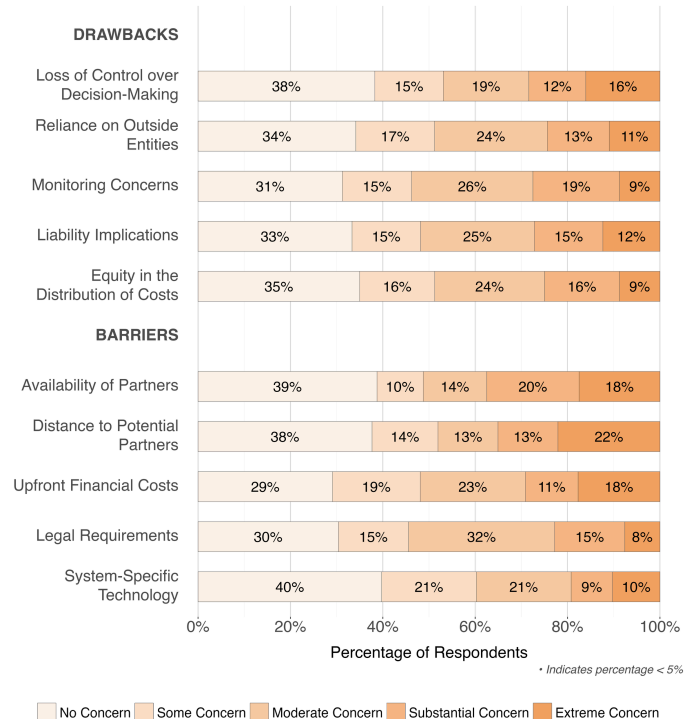
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

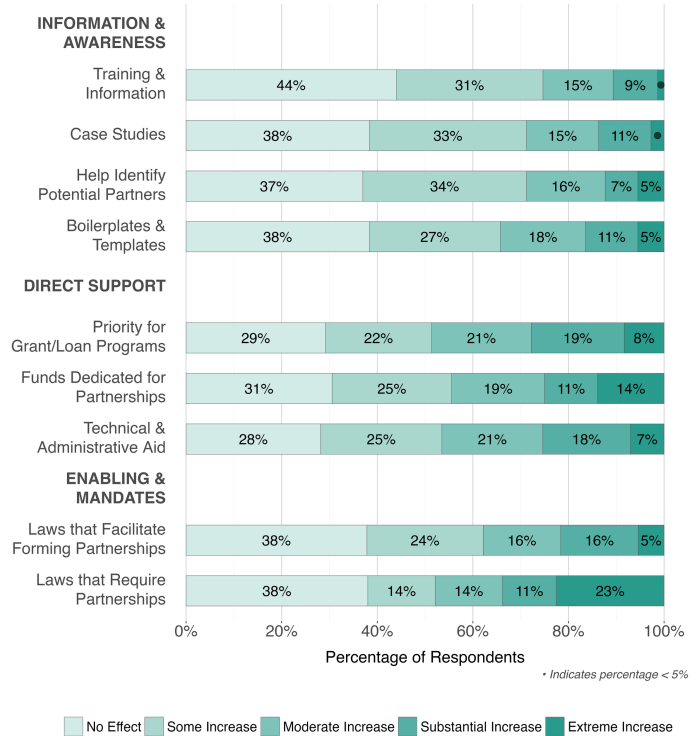


VERMONT

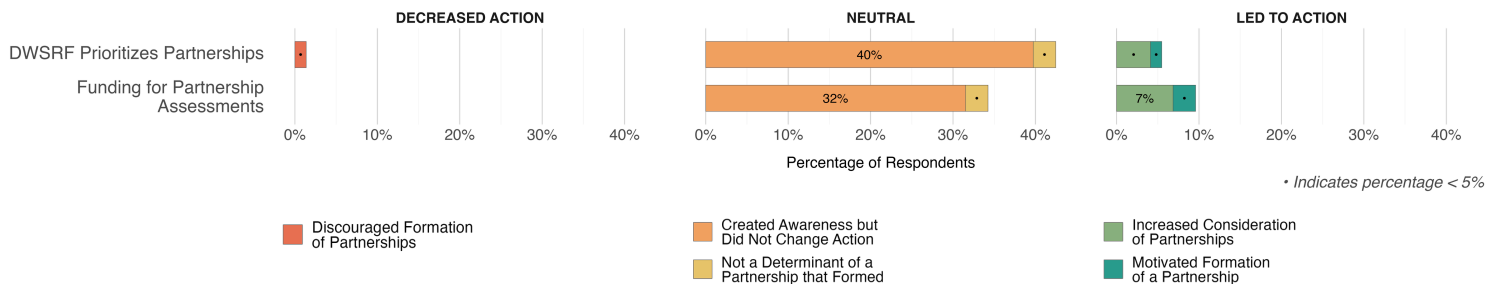
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	7%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	1%
Shared Staff	2%	0%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	3%	1%	41%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	1%	29%
Informal	1%	0%	35%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

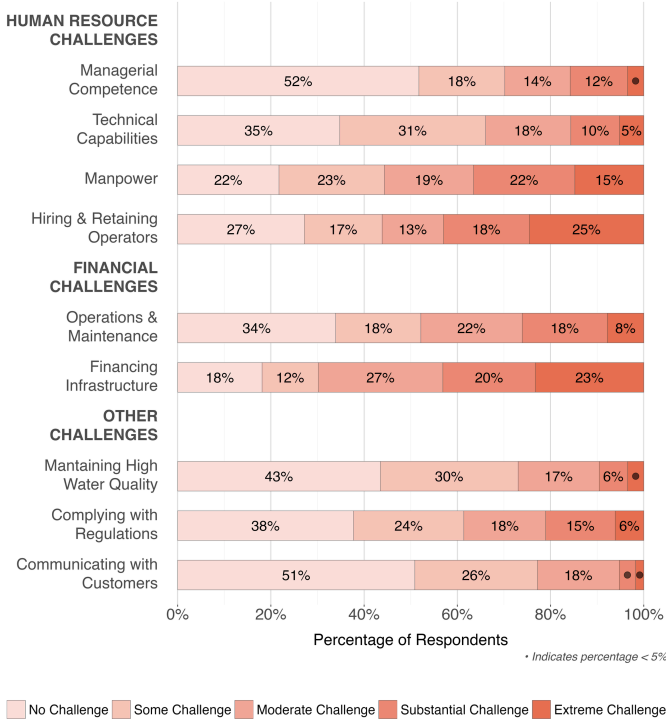


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



VIRGINIA

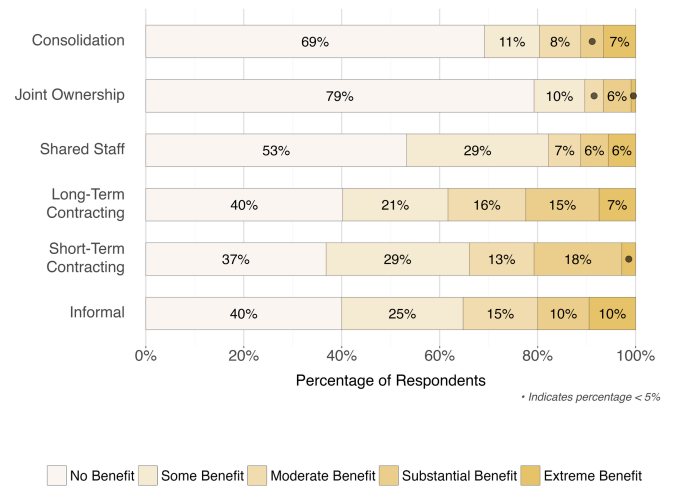
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



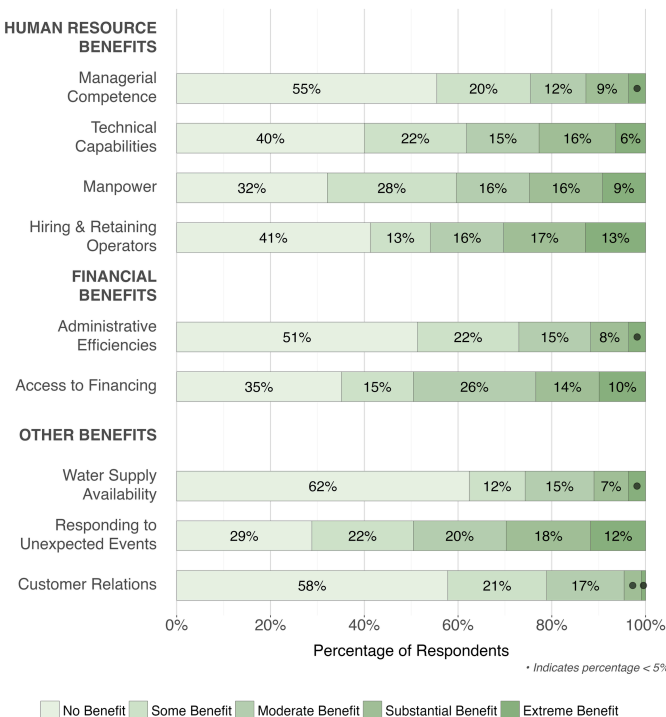
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	125	1007	12%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	58	433	13%
Private	49	544	12%
Community	14		
Other	4	30	13%

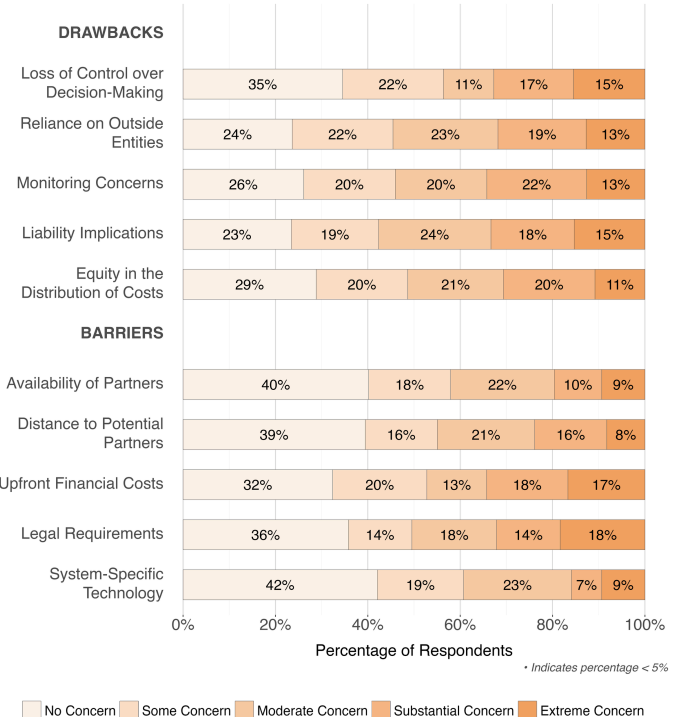
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

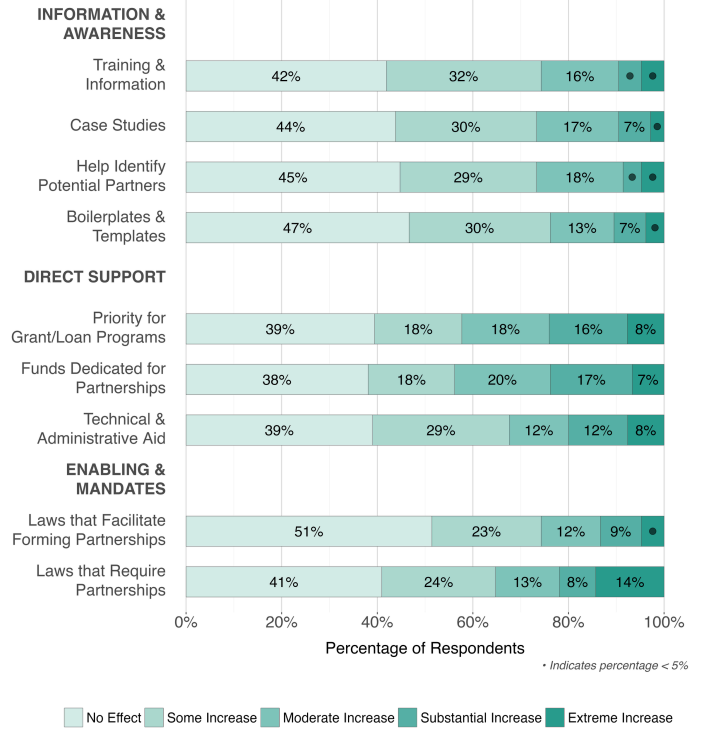


VIRGINIA

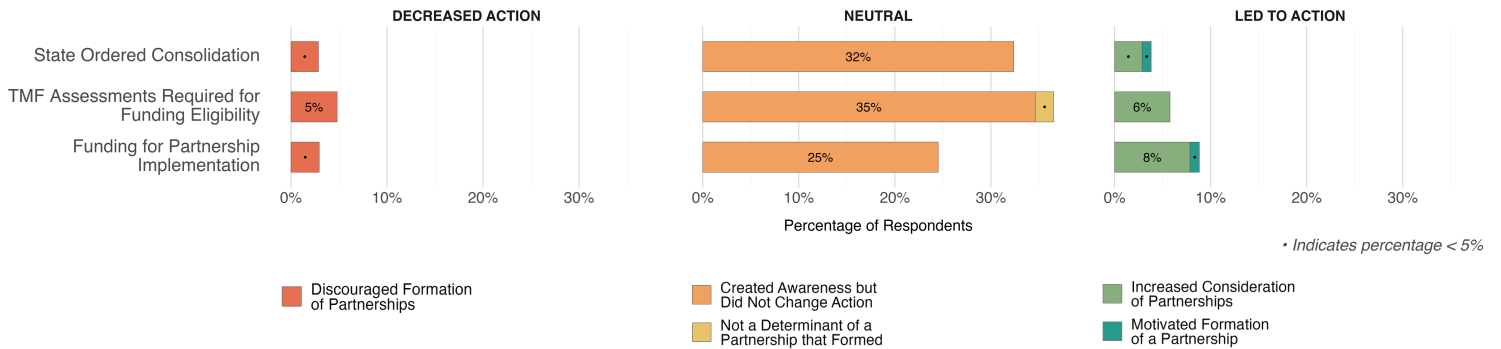
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	1%	0%	6%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	5%
Shared Staff	2%	0%	9%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	0%	32%
Short-Term Contracting	5%	1%	26%
Informal	3%	0%	24%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

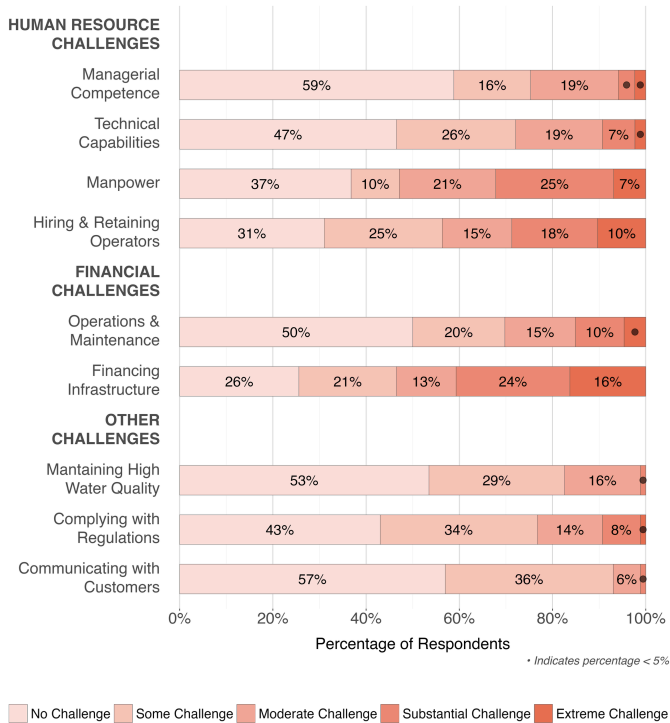


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



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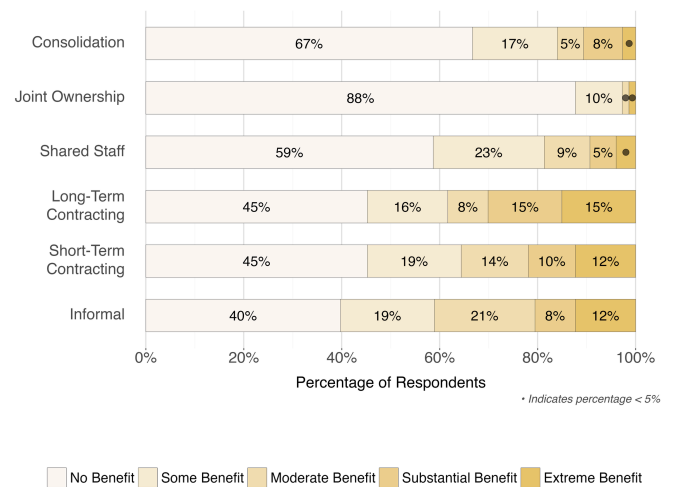
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



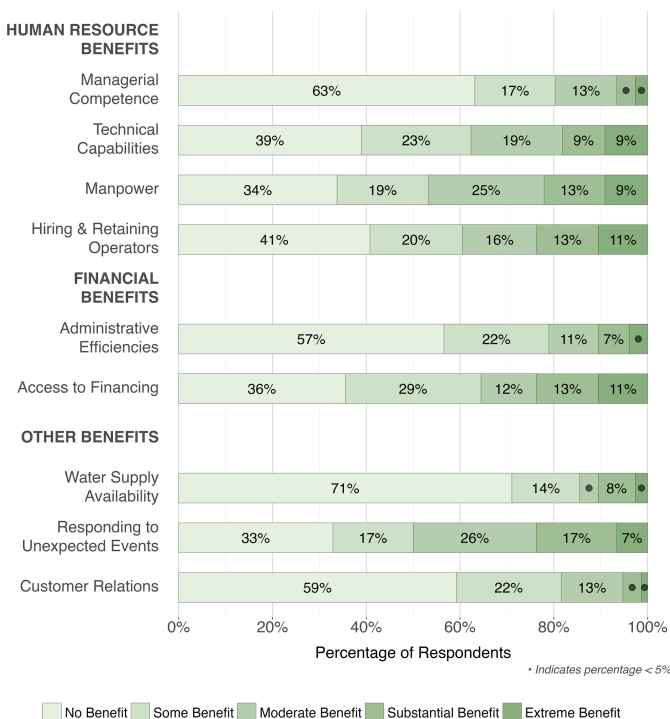
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	90	2168	4%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	35	566	6%
Private	19	1583	3%
Community	34		
Other	2	19	11%

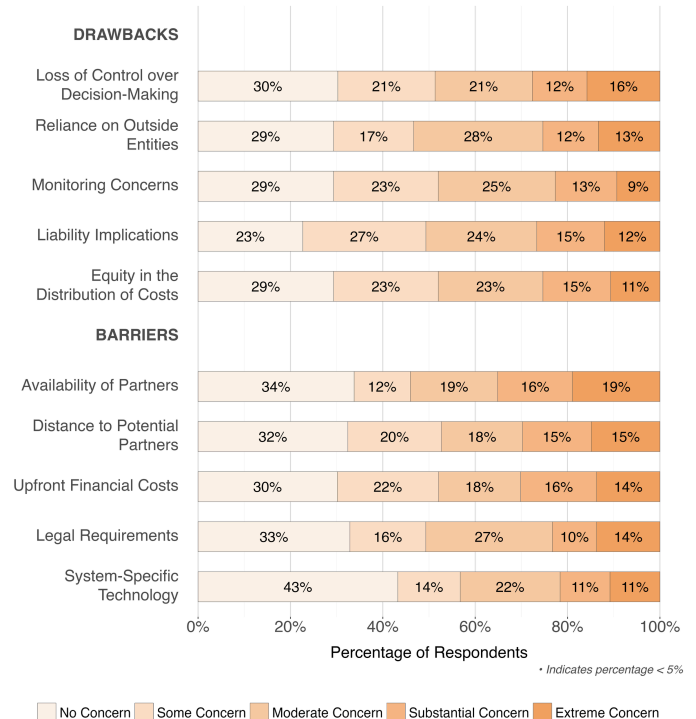
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

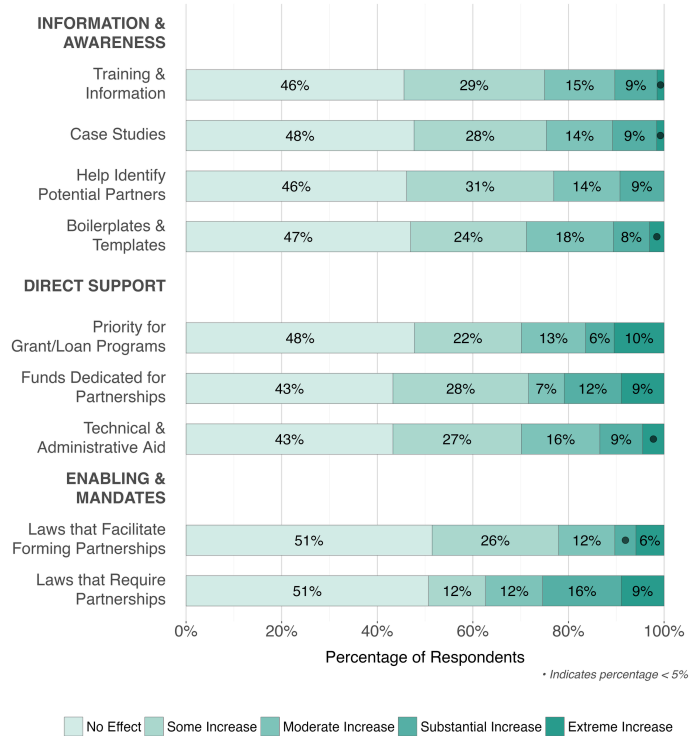


WASHINGTON

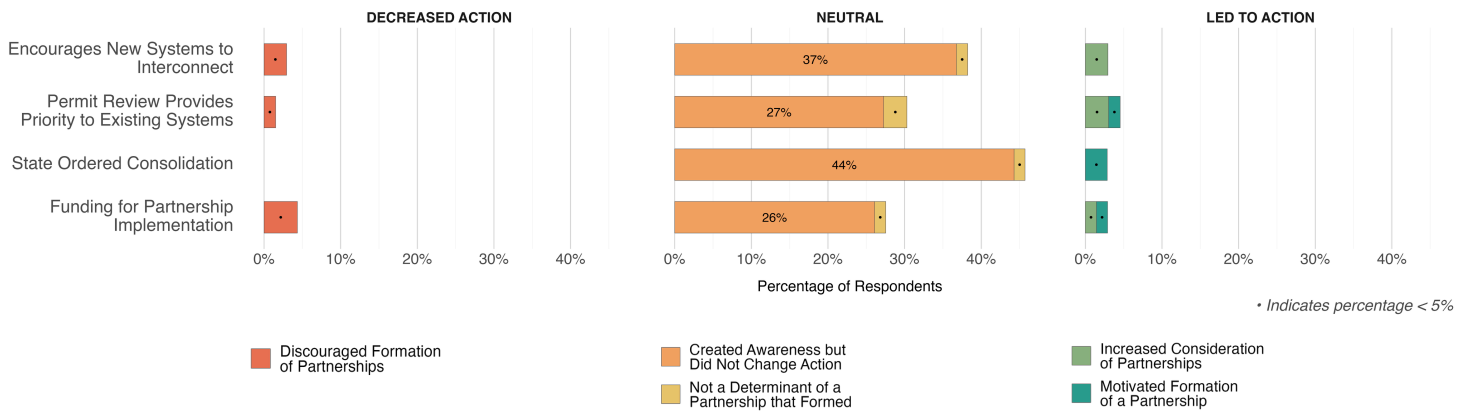
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	3%	0%	5%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	1%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	4%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	0%	29%
Short-Term Contracting	6%	1%	22%
Informal	1%	1%	19%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

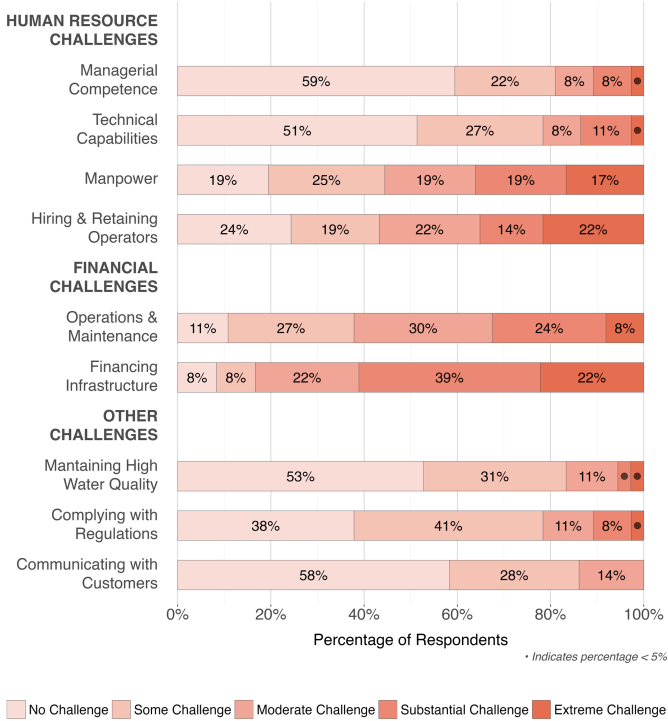


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation





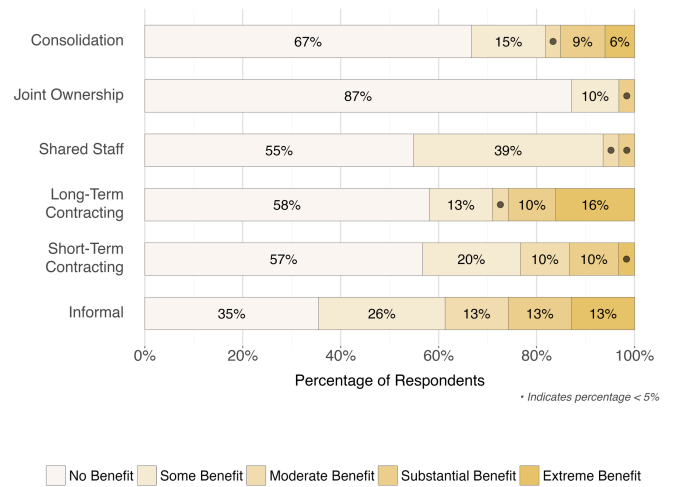
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



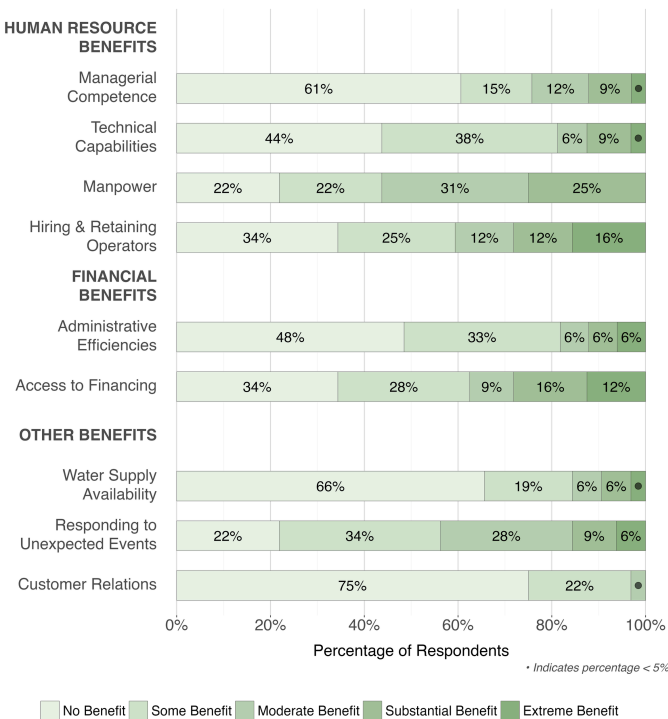
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	41	395	10%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	34	299	11%
Private	4	90	7%
Community	2		
Other	1	6	17%

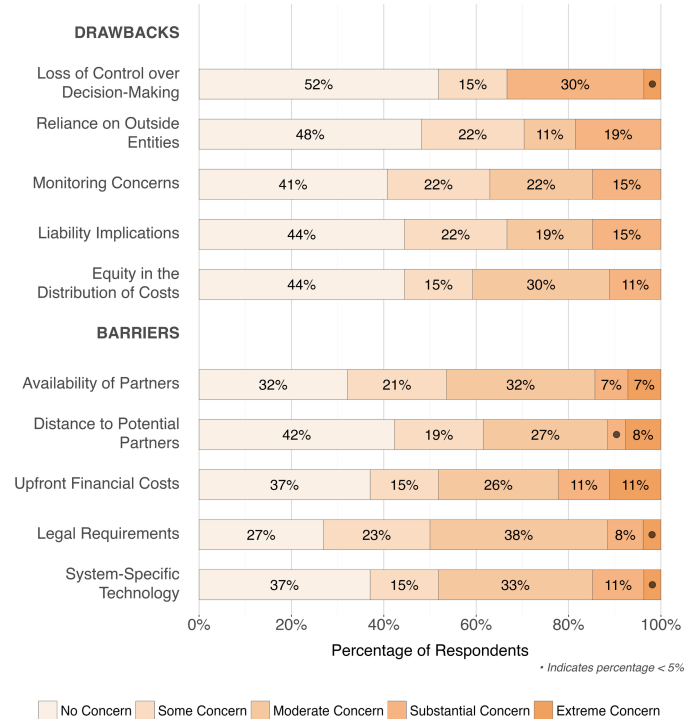
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

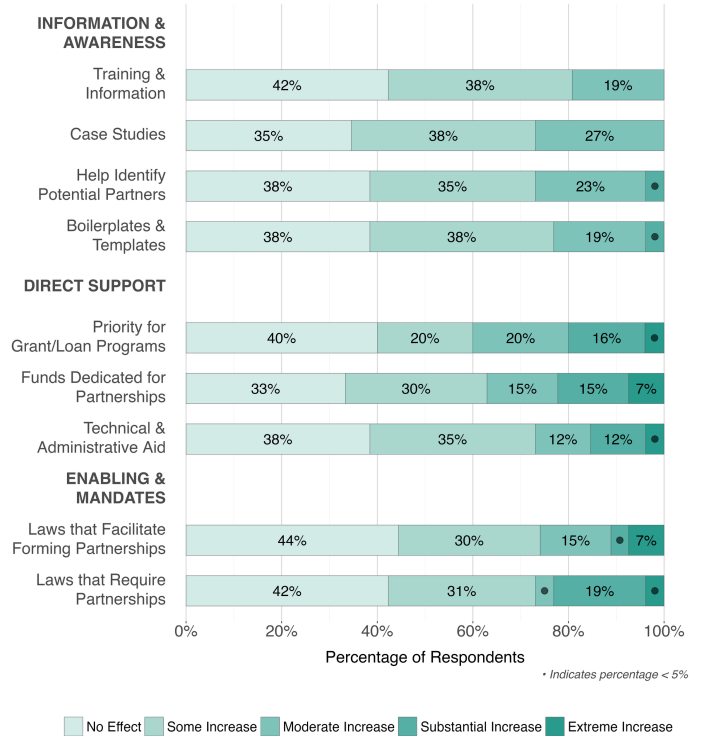




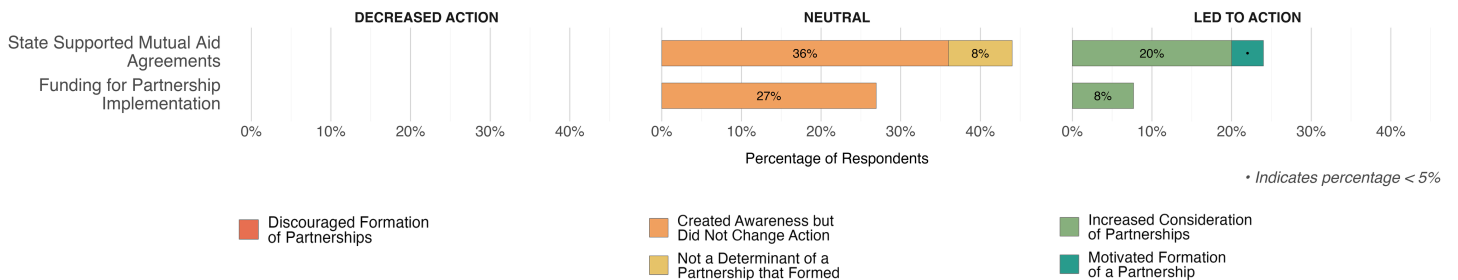
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	3%	3%	0%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	0%
Shared Staff	0%	0%	7%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	0%	30%
Short-Term Contracting	0%	0%	24%
Informal	0%	0%	47%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

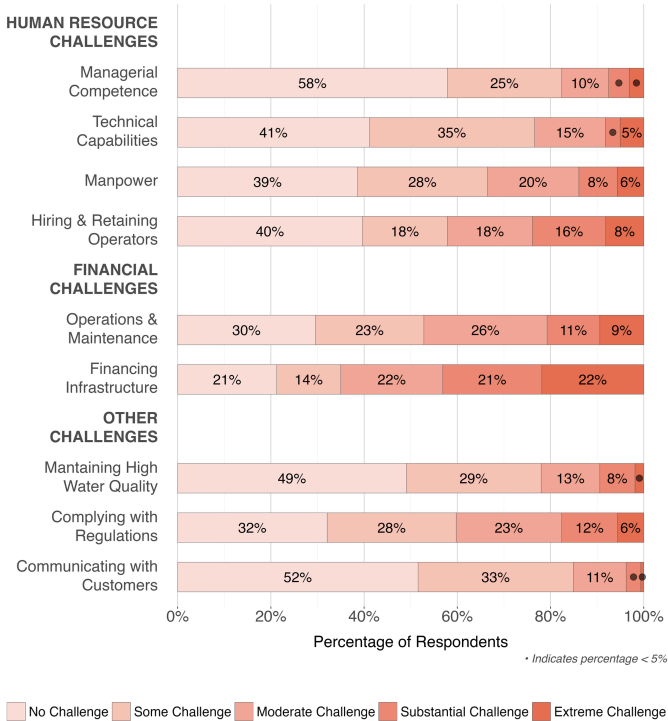


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



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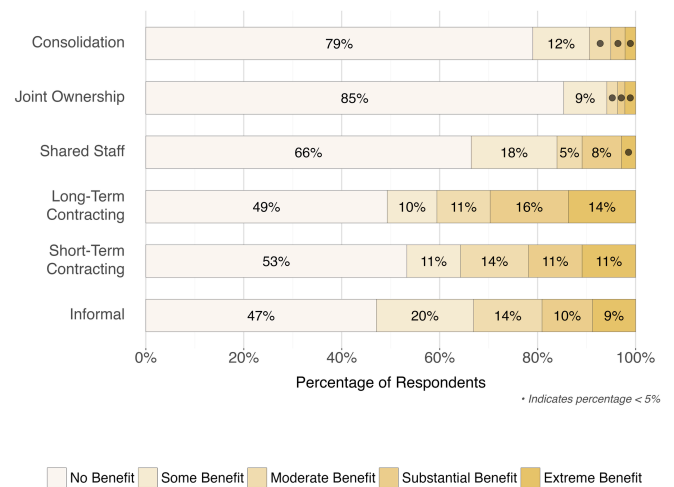
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



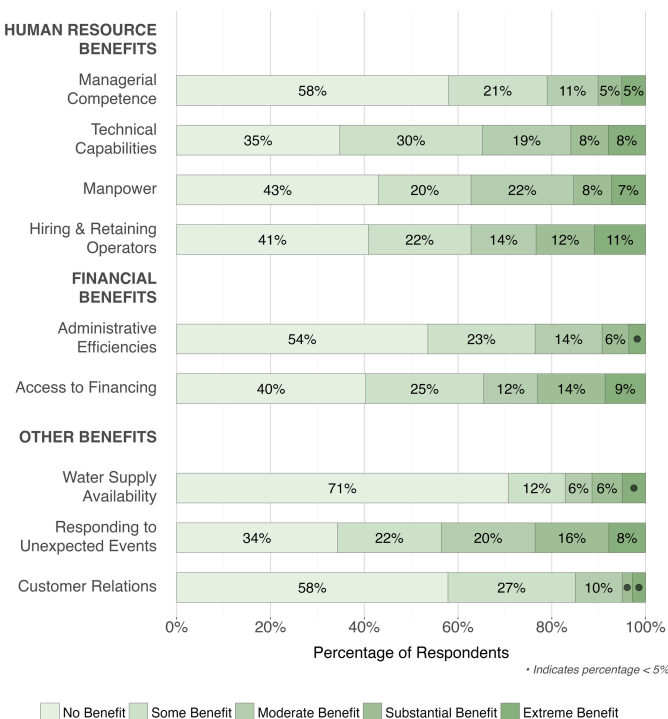
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	172	943	18%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	91	497	18%
Private	43	430	14%
Community	27		
Other	11	16	69%

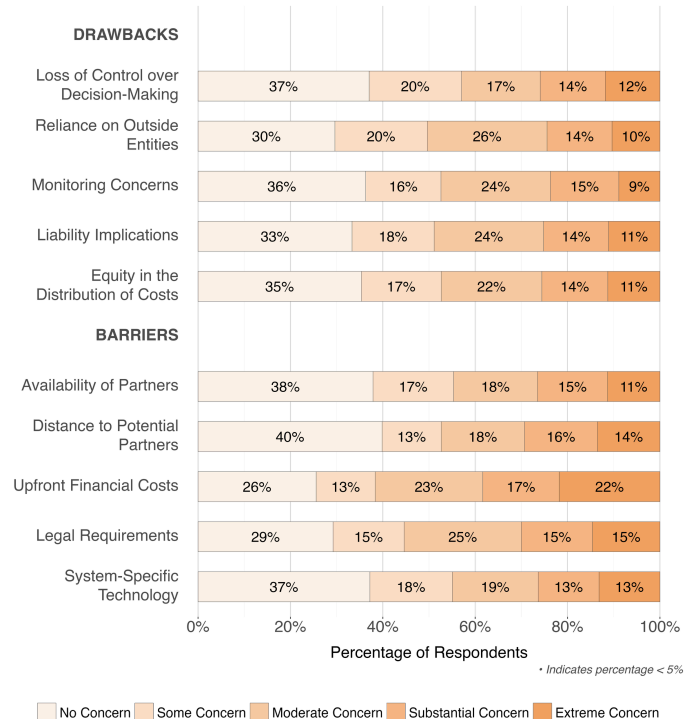
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

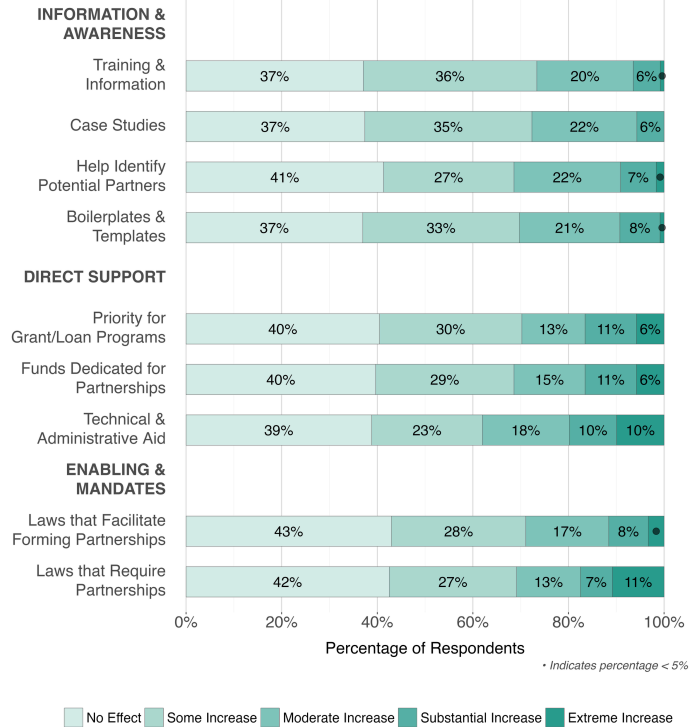




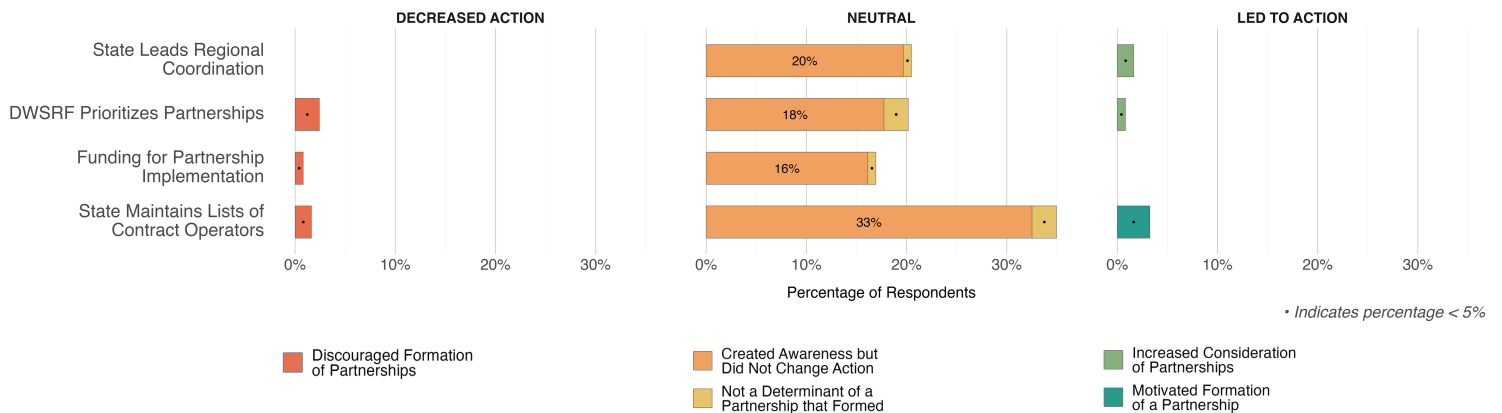
Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	0%	0%	1%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	3%
Shared Staff	1%	0%	10%
Long-Term Contracting	1%	0%	29%
Short-Term Contracting	4%	0%	26%
Informal	3%	0%	28%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation

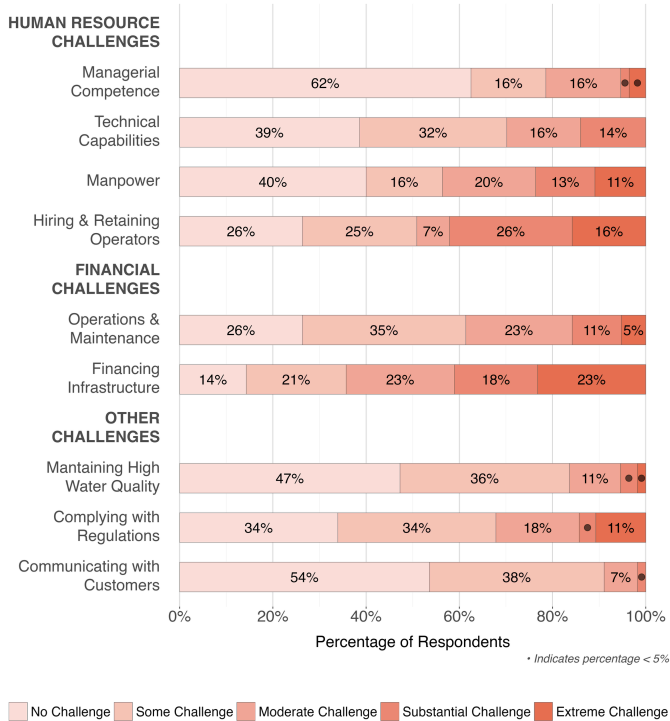


Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation



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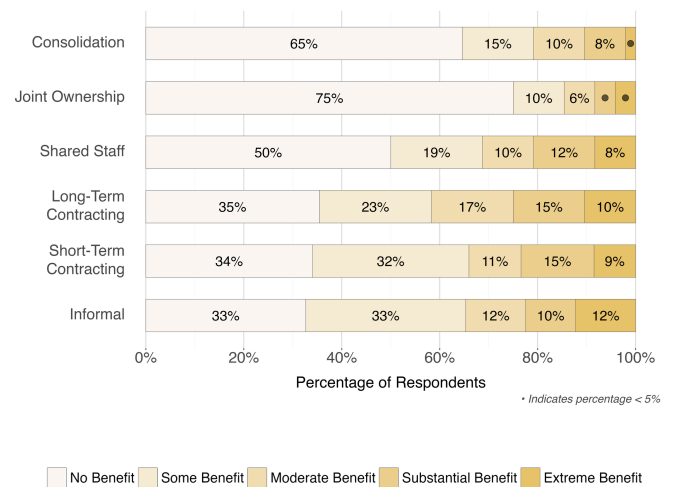
Challenges Confronted by Small CWS



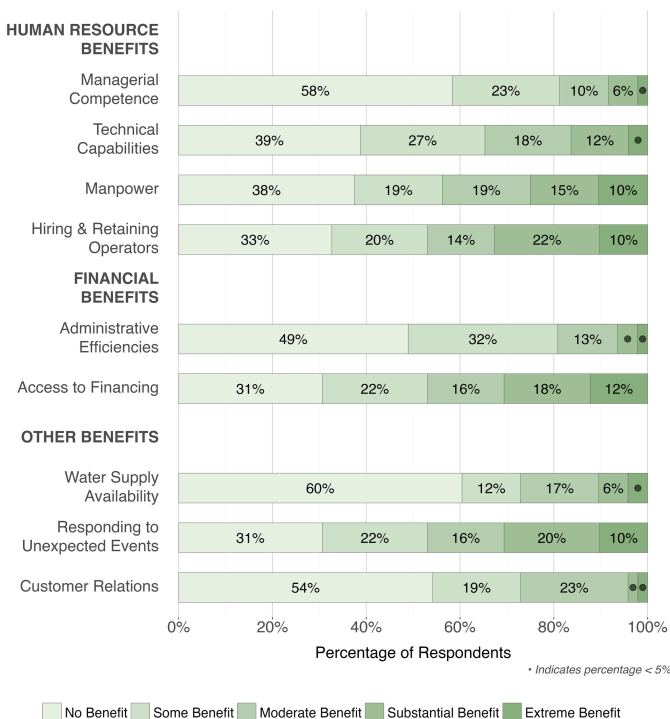
Survey Respondents

	Survey Respondents (#)	Population of Small CSW (#)	Response Rate (%)
All Small CWS	60	308	19%
By Ownership Type			
Local Government	35	126	28%
Private	18	169	14%
Community	6		
Other	1	13	8%

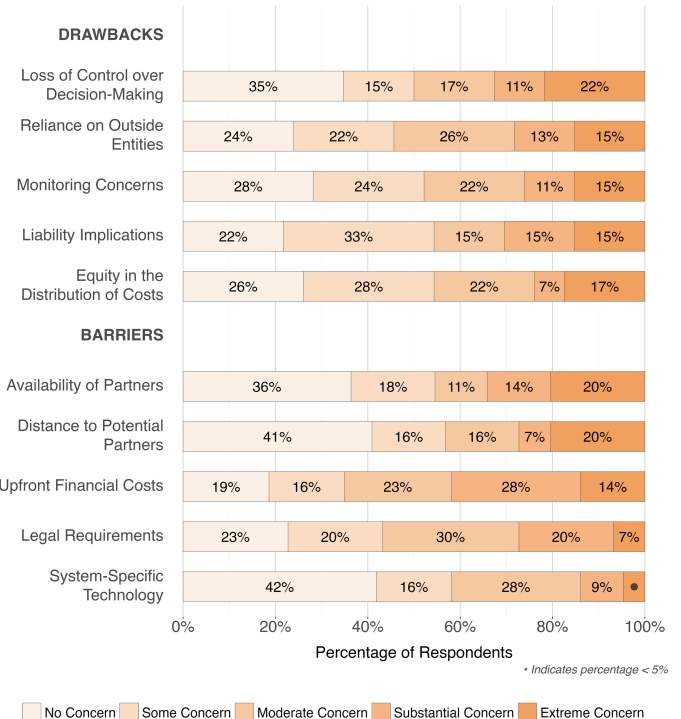
Benefits by Partnership Type



Perceived Benefits of Partnerships



Partnership Drawbacks and Barriers

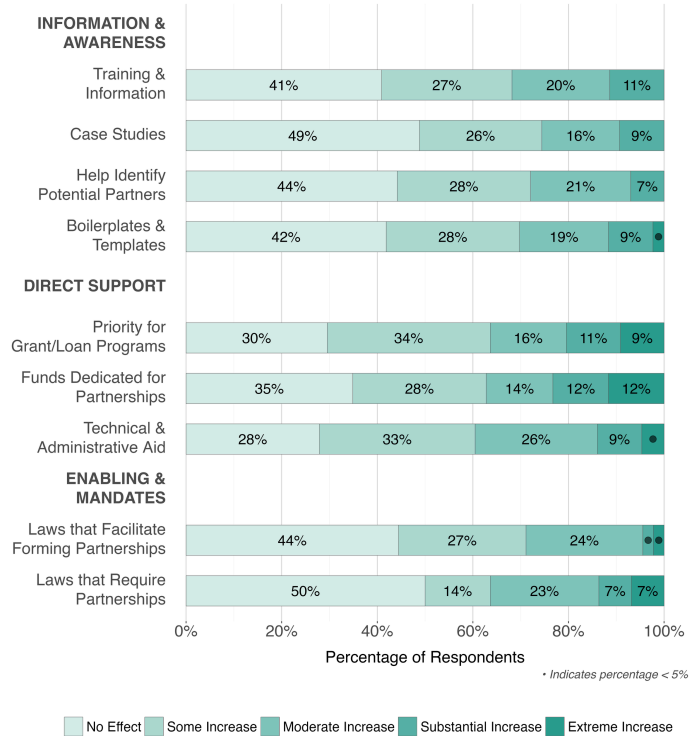


WYOMING

Experience with Partnerships

Type of Partnership:	Survey Respondents		
	Partnership Ended Successfully	Partnership Ended Unsuccessfully	Partnership Ongoing
Consolidation	2%	0%	4%
Joint Ownership	0%	0%	9%
Shared Staff	2%	2%	10%
Long-Term Contracting	0%	2%	34%
Short-Term Contracting	8%	2%	23%
Informal	2%	2%	34%

Effects of Additional Interventions On Partnership Formation



Effect of Existing State Policies on Partnership Formation

