

Building Economically Vibrant Communities

Situation: Among economic development professionals, government officials and business leaders, consensus is growing that spurring local economic development requires a multifaceted strategy, not one-dimensional industrial recruitment. This strategy includes promoting economic growth through the development of a local system of support to building capacities of aspiring entrepreneurs and existing small businesses while increasing the quality of life for Southerners in the communities where they live and work.

Topics	Priorities	Strategy-OUTPUT		Short-Term Outcome (Learning)		Intermediate Outcome (Actions)		Long-Term Outcome (Conditions)	
		Strategy	Measure	Outcome	Measure	Outcome	Measure	Outcome	Measure
Increasing Entrepreneur/ Small Business Competency	Developing the mix of strategies that can build the competency of current and emerging entrepreneurs and small business owners.	Provide education and skill building opportunities (i.e. educational sessions, online materials, technical assistance) for both potential and existing entrepreneurs and small business owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number of learning opportunities/ technical assistance offered •Number of participants 	Increase participants' knowledge and skills related to business planning and management concepts and tools presented	Number of participants indicating an increased understanding of and level of competency employing business planning and management concepts and tools	Participants implement at least one new strategy identified during learning opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants that implement a new strategy • Number of strategies adopted 	Participating Entrepreneurs/ small business owners begin, sustain, and grow businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants that start and sustain their business • Percent change in profitability
		Assist rural communities to become "entrepreneurial – friendly communities" through strategic planning efforts, incentive programs, positive asset mapping, etc.	Number of communities that have undergone support planning efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Increase community understanding of appropriate strategies to support existing businesses and new entrepreneurs •Identify best practices strategies that could be implemented to support small businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number of communities •Number of community planning participants •Number of communities that have identified potential strategies to adopt 	Participating organizations and communities adopt best practices and implemented strategies to support entrepreneurial development in their community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number of strategies adopted •Number of communities adopting strategies 	Strategies adopted enhance the environment for the growth and development of new and existing businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new and existing businesses that report positive impact of strategy on their businesses. • Number of concerns, problems resolved or opportunities realized through activities
Fostering Entrepreneur Friendly Environments	Fostering an environment that encourages and enhances entrepreneur and small business growth and development.	Facilitate the creation of a network of entrepreneurs that can provide ongoing peer support and reinforce the connection between entrepreneurs and service providers	Number of new networking, mentoring and coaching outlets available to entrepreneurs	Increase awareness of the importance of entrepreneurial networks	Number of participants indicating an increased understanding of the role of social capital in entrepreneurial development	Participants, organizations and communities increased partnerships and networks to address entrepreneurial development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individual participants in networking meetings • Number of governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in network 	Networks of entrepreneurs, coaches, mentors and service providers assist and encourage entrepreneurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of private capital (\$) raised by participants • Number of members in network meetings (change over time)

Fostering Civic Engagement

Situation: Many Southerners express a feeling of disconnect from what takes place in their communities. Family and work demands, distressing community problems, feelings of apathy or alienation, entrenched leaders that oppose change - all are factors that hinder civic involvement within a community. Yet, reviving the civic investment of local people, institutions and organizations is a critical prerequisite for gaining traction to address the tough challenges facing rural communities.

	Priorities	Strategy - OUTPUT		Short-Term Outcome		Intermediate Outcome		Long-Term Outcome	
		Strategy	Measure	Outcome	Measure	Outcome	Measure	Outcome	Measure
Public Deliberation	Fostering citizen engagement through public deliberation and action planning that empower local people, organizations and groups to address important local issues, work together to identify viable solutions, and take action based on reasoned public judgment.	Conduct community public issues forums and volunteer facilitator training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of communities • Number of sessions conducted; • Number of facilitators trained, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of the value of citizen engagement in addressing community issues; • Increase skill of teams of community facilitators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants at sessions; • Percent of participants expressing an interest in developing strategies to address issues 	Increase number and diversity of citizens that are participating in community planning as a result of public deliberation sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants in planning sessions; • Number of communities involved; • Number of issues addressed; • Diversity of participants 	Community decisions made that better reflect the needs of the community.	Number of communities developing & implementing citizen-led action plans
Leadership Friendly Communities	Developing leadership-friendly communities that expand the diversity of local leaders and increase community involvement.	Conduct leadership training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trainings conducted; • Number of communities • Number of participants • Diversity of participants 	Increase knowledge and skill of leadership training participants	Number of participants indicating knowledge & skill increase via practical application/ evaluation of program	Leadership program participants become more actively involved in a variety of community-based activities and roles.	Number of participants that report becoming actively involved in community roles (i.e.: civic clubs, grassroots orgs., elected positions, community task force, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants feel an increased sense of ownership and commitment in the community. • Community leadership is more representative of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants that report an increased sense of ownership and commitment to the community; • Number of participants that remain actively involved in the community over time. • Increased alignment of leadership demographics to community demographics (race, ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)

Enhancing Opportunities in Distressed and Low-Wealth Communities

Situation – Poverty Reduction: The challenges of poverty are interdisciplinary and require collaborative community responses, investments in human capital, communication infrastructure, access and mobility that directly impact the financial capacity of rural and urban communities and their residents.

Situation – Disaster Response: Responding to natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornadoes is a part of life in the South. A recent analysis of FEMA data that paired the number of presidential disaster declarations with the variety of disasters experienced at the county level showed that over half (57%) of the counties that surfaced as most "at risk" for disaster were in the Southern region.

	Priorities	Strategy - OUTPUT		Short-Term Outcome		Intermediate Outcome		Long-Term Outcome	
		Strategy	Measure	Outcome	Measure	Outcome	Measure	Outcome	Measure
Poverty Reduction	Build capacity of communities and individuals to address poverty related issues.	Conduct training, strategic development, coalition development technical assistance, and civic engagement processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sessions held, • Number of communities, • Number of participants, • Diversity of participants 	Communities and individuals become more knowledgeable regarding poverty reducing strategies	Number of individuals participating in training that can articulate or demonstrate an understanding of a poverty reducing principle or strategy.	Communities and individuals adopt one or more strategies to reduce poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of communities adopting an identified strategy. • Number of strategies 	Participating individuals and communities improve on key indicators of poverty related to the strategy identified (i.e. education, financial status, income, etc.)	Outcomes will be measured against one or more of the Quality of Life indicators (Link to specific document)
Disaster Preparation and Recovery	Build community and individual capacity to prepare for and respond to disaster situations through training and partnership development.	Develop and provide disaster educational materials, curricula, training, coaching and planning assistance (convene partners, strategic planning, civic engagement, etc.) to help communities and individuals with disaster mitigation, preparation, and recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of materials developed, • Number of communities participating, • Number of partners identified, • Number of training/coaching/assistance offered 	Community members, state and county governments, communities and organizations learn about hazards relevant to their areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation representative of community and organizational diversity; • Increase in understanding of hazards and appropriate strategies to address concerns 	Participants develop plans to address disaster concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of plans developed; • Number of partners that are engaged throughout the planning process; • Number of communities 	Participants/communities are better prepared to respond to disaster situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of plans that include specific identified "promising practices" strategies, • Number of plans reviewed and refreshed annually, • Number of plans implemented during disaster situation (results)