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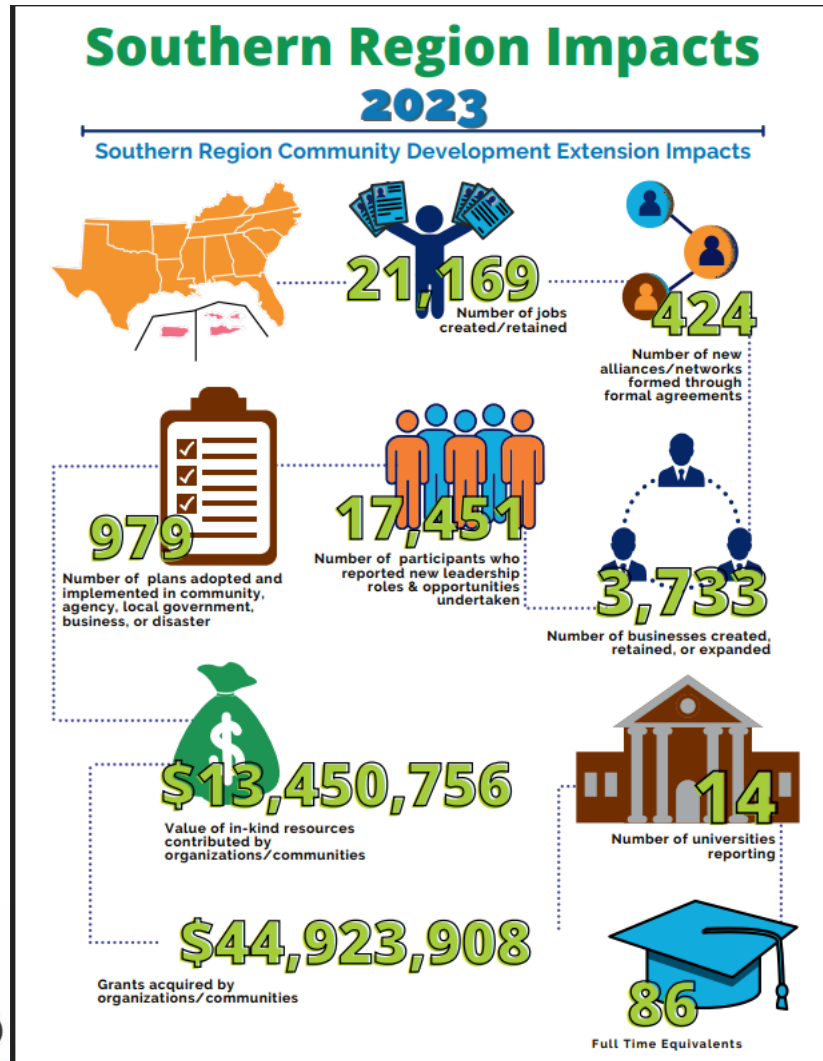
May 29, 2025
Indicator Training

Southern Region Program Leaders Network (SR-PLN)

Why do we collect indicators?

Useful to disseminate regional impact of

Community Development Programming

Statewide and Nationally

Helps articulate value of our work and communicate part of what we do

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How is the Information used?

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Mississippi — MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
MSU-Extension partnered with stakeholders to create and promote a local food trail in Northeast Mississippi to increase visibility and establish the region as a local food destination. The project created a local food trail, a website, and a social media presence. A digital marketing campaign was then used to drive traffic to the food trail website. Overall, the campaigns resulted in 1.4 million social and digital media engagements.

North Carolina — NC STATE UNIVERSITY
The growth of outdoor recreation is important for rural places' economy and quality of life. NC State's Tourism Extension launched a program in a county with a large amount of national forest land to cultivate the current outdoor recreation user's stewardship of the region's natural amenities through education on tourism impacts and best management practices. Participants defined a set of community priorities for developing the outdoor recreation economy. This program seeks to expand across NC.

Oklahoma — LANGSTON UNIVERSITY
Langston University-Sherman Lewis School of Agriculture and Applied Sciences hosted the Biennial "Black Towns Summit" in Oklahoma City. The Summit brought together Black Towns and Community's Mayors, Trustees, and town residents for the informative event. One of the Historically Black Towns which was awarded a $1.2 million dollar grant to improve the town's water waste system and repaired roads around town that have improved the lives of their communities' residents.

Puerto Rico — Universidad de Puerto Rico
In the UPR ACM Community Garden, funded by USDA NRCS, students engage with the soil, feeling its texture and absorbing its wisdom. They learn to listen to plants and decipher signals for optimal care, gaining responsibility by tending the garden, removing weeds and pests. Equipping themselves with the right tools enhances efficiency. The community experiences gratification in harvesting fruits, appreciating each growth stage. Seeds germinate, mature, and nourish families when sold, fulfilling the community.

South Carolina — COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences
Clemson Extension promotes entrepreneurial development via business planning, feasibility studies, and related assistance for rural entrepreneurs. The SC Center for Cooperative and Enterprise Development (SCCED) and the Freshwater Coast Center for Rural Development (FCCRD) assisted entrepreneurs and communities receive grant funds and awards. SCCED alone helped secure grants totaling $575,895. Similarly, FCCRD received approximately $30,000 in public and private investments for support of new entrepreneurial activities.

SC STATE UNIVERSITY — TRANSFORMING LIVES. INSPIRING GREATNESS.
South Carolina State University Community Economic Development (CED) continues to help South Carolina communities face challenges and opportunities. The CED engages in entrepreneurial, non-profit, and leadership development technical assistance. One program highlight included piloting the Ag, Minority, Family and Small Business program for socially disadvantage minority businesses. With a special emphasis on creating and sustaining jobs, education and development services are provided through a series of workshops, peer meetings, and technical assistance.

Tennessee — THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE
UT Extension focused on enhancing community development and economic development through three funded projects: Environmental Protection Agency's Technical, Managerial and Financial Assistance to Water Systems, National 4-H Council's Tech Changemakers Program, and AT&T Digital Literacy Program. The EPA program is focused on providing technical assistance to 54 water systems over a three-year period. The Tech Changemakers and the digital literacy training programs are focused on broadband adoption in 42 counties in Tennessee.

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Texas — PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
Over the last three years (2020-2023) The Prairie View A&M University CED Unit established The Rural Workforce Academy (TRWA) as a hands-on skills training academy funded through a partnership with the Economic Development Administration. Since the establishment of the program in 2020, Prairie View provided training and assisted 2,212 individuals in skills training (Certified Nursing Assistant, Construction, Electrical, Welding, Cyber-security), job placement, soft skills and employment preparation, wraparound services, and disaster assessments.

Virginia — Virginia Cooperative Extension (Virginia Tech • Virginia State University)
Virginia's Farm to School(F2S) efforts leverage strong partnerships between Extension and the Department of Education to work as a broad-based, multi-stakeholder team. Supplementing the Virginia F2S Toolkit, Extension hosted a webinar series that expanded on best practices by featuring practitioners with on-the-ground experience and tips from the field. F2S agricultural producer curriculum training increased capacity for workshops providing necessary knowledge for producers to navigate sales to schools. These efforts reached over 200 participants.

West Virginia — WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY Extension Service
West Virginia State University Extension Service's Art Extension Educator works throughout the state with artists and organizations. The educator leads two programs, one is community arts based, named Ripple. This program facilitates a design team composed of artists and other community leaders to create a project that fosters meaningful partnerships with the Arts. The Creative Entrepreneur Fellowship works directly with artists to improve their business practice, gain skills and boost confidence as an entrepreneur.

RRDC — Regional Rural Development Centers — Elevating Rural Economies since 1972

Southern Region Program Leadership Network — Cooperative Extension System

SRDC

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Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Southern Region Program Leadership Network — Cooperative Extension System

State/Institution Contact

Please identify who in your state/university will do these.

For joint 1890/1862 data collection systems you can have a joint numbers report and then vignettes for each Institution.

The Process:

1. Determine which indicators apply to your institution.
2. Complete the Excel template accordingly.
3. Email Excel document to **Roseanne Scammahorn**, r.scammahorn@msstate.edu and **Carmen Kelly,** carmen.kelly@mssstate.edu by or **before the July 15ᵗʰ deadline.**

- Data is collected and reported annually to reflect 12 months.
- The "but for" principle applies.

Number of participants reporting new leadership roles or opportunities

New leadership roles/opportunities are not limited to new formal leadership roles. The indicator may also include an expansion of current responsibilities, leading new activities, or serving the community in a new way based on increased capacity due to Extension training.

Indicators & definitions

Number of individuals taking on a leadership role in the community for the first time

New for 2025

This indicator captures individuals who have never before held a leadership position in their community, but have done so as a result of Extension programming.

Indicators & definitions

Number of new or deepened alliances or networks formed at the community level

Modified for 2025

This indicator tracks the number of new partnerships, collaborations, or networks that have been formed or strengthened within a community as an outcome of Extension's work.

Number of community- or organizational-level plans developed

Modified for 2025

This indicator captures the number of new strategic, action, or operational plans that have been created at the community or organizational level with Extension's involvement.

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Number of plans implemented

This indicator measures the number of the plans developed in the previous indicator that have begun implementation, even if not fully completed.

Modified for 2025

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Indicators & definitions

Dollar value of grants or other resources accessed by communities or organizations

Modified for 2025

This indicator includes the total dollar value of grants, contracts, or other external funding and resources that have been **secured by communities or organizations** as a result of Extension's support or facilitation.

NOTE: This is not dollars for Extension, but for community organizations.

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Indicators & definitions

Number of hours contributed by community partners

This indicator tracks the total number of volunteer or in-kind hours contributed by community partners towards Extension-led initiatives or activities.

New for 2025

Indicators & definitions

Number of businesses or organizations created, retained, or expanded

Modified for 2025

This indicator captures the number of new businesses or organizations that have been started, existing ones that have been retained, or those that have expanded their operations due to Extension's community development efforts.

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Indicators & definitions

Number of businesses or organizations with increased access to financial resources

New for 2025

This indicator tracks the number of businesses or organizations that have gained improved access to capital, credit, or other financial resources through Extension's assistance or interventions.

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Indicators & definitions

Number of jobs created, obtained, or retained

This indicator measures the number of new jobs that have been created, individuals who have obtained employment, or existing jobs that have been retained as a consequence of Extension's community development programming.

Modified for 2025

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Indicators & definitions

Number of program participants reporting new or deepened connections with people.

New for 2025

This indicator measures the number of participants who have made new or strengthened existing connections with people as a result of programs.

Number of program participants reporting new or deepened community engagement

New for 2025

This indicator captures the number of individuals who have become more actively engaged in their community, whether through new initiatives or increased participation, as a result of Extension programs.

Indicators & definitions

Number of participants indicating improved quality of life

New for 2025

This indicator measures the number of program participants who report an improvement in their overall quality of life as a result of Extension's community development efforts.

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Indicators & definitions

Number of participants completing skill development training programs offered through Community Development Extension

New for 2025

This indicator tracks the number of individuals who have participated in and completed Extension-provided training programs focused on building community development skills. Examples – digital skills, workforce, facilitation, grant writing, leadership – just about anything

Indicators & definitions

Total number of contact hours in programs offered through Community Development Extension

New for 2025

This indicator captures the total number of participant contact hours across all Community Development Extension programs and activities. Examples – one on one technical assistance.

Indicators & definitions

Number of entities that have developed practices or improved practices to protect natural resources

New for 2025

This indicator tracks the number of communities, organizations, or other entities that have either established new or enhanced existing practices to conserve and protect natural resources, facilitated by Extension.

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Number of entities that have applied decision support tools

New for 2025

This indicator measures the number of communities, organizations, or other stakeholders that have utilized decision-making frameworks, models, or other analytical tools provided or facilitated by Extension.

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Internal Extension Capacity Indicators:

Dollar value of grants and other resources received by Community Development programs

This indicator captures the total dollar value of external funding and other resources secured by Extension's Community Development programs.

New for 2025

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Indicators & definitions

Internal Extension Capacity Indicators:

Number of new or expanded collaborations formed within Extension

This indicator tracks the number of new cross-programmatic or inter-disciplinary collaborations that have been established or existing ones that have been strengthened within the Extension system.

New for 2025

Indicators & definitions

Internal Extension Capacity Indicators:

Number of Community Development FTEs

This indicator provides a count of the full-time equivalent (FTE) positions dedicated to Community Development work within the Extension system (i.e., how many FTEs are funded by Extension specifically for Community Development Extension programming)

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Data collection strategies

- State-level reporting systems vs. collection from individuals doing the work

- Who are the data keepers? Is data collected already by someone in your institution?

- How do you train people to collect your data?

Vignette best practices

What makes a strong impact statement?

Clearly articulates:

- The issue - state the problem

- The response to that issue – what as the action taken?

- The results achieved – demonstrate the difference made

Overall Program

After having successful outcomes during their pilot year, the Community & Economic Development Unit of the Cooperative Extension Program received $130,000 from USDA Office of the Secretary to train entrepreneurs interested in starting a business in energy auditing and home weatherization. As a result 18 of 20 participants were Building Performance Institute certified, 8 received internships, 8 started a business, 2 started non-profit organizations, and 8 received contract offers. The estimated economic impact is $1,820,700.

75 words

Strong Program Highlight

Nearly 18% of Virginians live in food deserts. With partners, Virginia Cooperative Extension implements programs to increase healthy food access. One innovative approach is the New River Valley "prescription for produce" model where physicians at the Community Health Clinic write prescriptions for physical activity and produce from the Farmacy garden. Recipients help in the garden & over 830 lbs. of produce were harvested in 2015. In Petersburg city, seven community and inner-city school gardens were started.

75 words

Resources available

SR-PLN Community Development Committee:

http://srpln.msstate.edu/pln/crd.html

Past Reports:

https://srdc.msstate.edu/impacts/southern-region-impacts

Our Contact Info:

Stacey McCullough – smccullough@uada.edu

Susan Jakes – susan_jakes@ncsu.edu

Melissa Bond – melissa.bond@uky.edu

Wrap Up

Still have questions or want to talk about indicators more?

Stay online for our Open Office Hours.

Provide feedback on today's training:

https://uaex.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6KcVCNeCIJMTINg