COMMUNITY RESOURCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CRED)

PROGRAMMING IMPACTS REPORT

PREPARED BY NORTH CENTRAL REGION CRED PROGRAM LEADERS

SEPTEMBER 2010
# Acknowledgements

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There has been a rich tradition of cooperation among the Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) programs going back to the 1960s and '70s. Lest we forget, Earl Heady began the first regional rural development center in the early 1970s as a joint venture among the land-grant institutions in the North Central Region. This collaboration and these research efforts in Extension continue today.

This report examines the impacts of CRED collective programming during the year 2009. It is based upon the jointly agreed-to indices or metrics stemming from the regional logic models developed in 2006. In many respects, this report has been compiled in an exploratory fashion. With all the nuances and variations in both programming and reporting found between the states in CRED programming, we wanted to answer the question: “Is a regional report feasible?”

As expected, no two states conduct their CRED programming the same. We experienced continued difficulty in both evaluating and reporting CRED program impacts. However, the aggregation of the data collected does provide valuable insights into both the existing and potential impacts of CRED programs on our respective states and their communities.

Reports from only half the states indicated that more than three-quarters of a billion dollars were leveraged through participation in CRED programming within the region. This is likely a fraction of the total impact. During that period, more than 5,400 jobs were created or retained, more than a million volunteer hours generated, and more than $44 million in grants procured. In each case, these data were secured by a fraction of the states reporting on the logic model metric. To state that the cumulative value of annual impacts of CRED programming within the region have a value in excess of $1 billion, despite being by far the least resourced program within the region, would not be hyperbole.

At the same time, this paper does report that we sell ourselves short. Problems with both program evaluation and reporting plague the documentation of impacts within the region. On average, only slightly more than seven states reported on any one of the metrics due to lack of documentation and/or evaluation. Collectively, we may be underreporting key economic and community impacts simply because the resources have not been put forth to collect the information.

The report concludes with sections on examples of successful multistate and intrastate programming, and recent programming to address emerging issues.
INTRODUCTION

The twelve states of the North Central Region have been long noted for their strong Extension programming related to Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED). CRED represents Extension’s efforts to provide educational programming and applied research for community and economic development. This programming has not only benefited clients throughout the twelve-state region, but has spurred notable scholarship at many of the land-grant institutions. (For a more detailed explanation of CRED programming, see Appendix A).

In recent years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has encouraged the state Extension systems to cooperate in program development and delivery across state lines. In response, the North Central Region’s Extension directors requested the development of joint logic models to plan regional programming. The states’ CRED program leaders responded in 2006 with the development of four logic models promoting cooperation in the areas of community economic development, community leadership development, organizational development, and participatory community planning. (See Appendix B for the complete logic models.)

The program leaders decided upon nine indices of impacts as a common measure of the four topical areas. These included standard measures of economic development such as jobs created, jobs retained, and the value of grants procured. Measures of community planning, inclusive participation, and community leadership were also incorporated into the impact indices. These included communities developed and implemented, volunteer hours associated with community-based programming, and the number of individuals taking on new leadership roles in their communities (See Appendix B for the complete list of metrics utilized by the regional logic models).

This report reflects the twelve states’ combined effort to achieve common measurement of CRED impacts during the year 2009. The degree of difficulty in compiling these data and shared information cannot be understated. As the saying goes: “If it was that easy it would have been done before.” Impacts of CRED programming are some of the most difficult to assess in Extension both in terms of measurement and methods. The CRED program is the most diverse across state lines in terms of disciplines, subject matter, and staffing. The program is also typically the smallest with the fewest resources.

These aforementioned issues provide an excellent rationale as to why this regional effort in CRED reporting is important. To build upon our limited resources, we simply need to work together. In learning from our common successes and failures, we can begin to articulate a better applied research and Extension agenda. Furthermore, we can begin to build and learn better processes of evaluation and reporting.
Numerous issues arose as the region’s CRED program leaders began to document the impacts agreed to in the logic models. While sharing a common plan of work with the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), our federal partner, each system has its own methods of program evaluation and impact reporting. CRED programming continues to be highly variable across the region in terms of both resources and programmatic approaches. Wisconsin has relatively a large number of county-based CRED staff, while most of the Great Plains states have only minimal field staff. Missouri’s industrial and business Extension program is considered part of its CRED effort. Many other Extension systems within the region do not have a similar program, and in those states that do, business and industrial Extension is considered independent of CRED.

Throughout this process, we encountered problems with measurement. Annual reporting varies from state to state. Some use calendar years. Others use a federal fiscal year. Still others use a state fiscal year from July 1 to June 30. For purposes of this report, the data reflect the reporting year of 2009, whether it is fiscal or annual. Thus, data from each state indicates impacts over a twelve-month period. Methods of data collection include the use of success stories from staff, targeted program evaluation, state web-based reporting systems, attribution to Extension by local leaders, and secondary sources.

There are inherent problems with CRED program evaluation and reporting. Community development knows no calendar, fiscal or otherwise. Business development, community infrastructure improvements, improved local housing, job creation, business expansion, “greener” communities, and new or revised comprehensive plans are just some of the ultimate impacts of Extension programming. Many of these impacts take years to evolve from the initial Extension program or activity. For the purposes of this regional report, the impacts were recorded during the annual period of time in which they occurred (and not necessarily during the annual period when the Extension activity took place).

In the interim between the initial program activity and the derived community impacts, Extension staff, program priorities and community leadership can change and organizations downsize, often resulting in a loss of the connection between Extension activities and resulting benefits to the community. An analogy might be a municipal water system that pumps a million gallons daily from its pumping station, but only records half a million gallons on the community’s water meters. Like this municipal system, many of Extension’s CRED impacts “leak” over time and the tendency is toward lost information and underreporting.

Finally, in most states, the CRED unit represents the smallest unit within each system. Frequently, the community development efforts in each state represent less than 10% of the system’s resources. While regional impact indicators were agreed to, no state reported impacts in every category, and no category includes data from more than nine states. Categories in which fewer than three states reported impacts were excluded from the results. There are a number of reasons for these reporting gaps. First, because CRED programming varies from state to state, not every state has Extension activities to report under all the categories. Second, a number of the states within the region have very small programs with limited access to evaluation expertise or reporting systems conducive to documenting impacts over multiple years. Third, not all nine indices are recorded in each state.
We also encountered inconsistencies in definition. While certain terms sound good during regional meetings (e.g., dollars leveraged), how these terms are used, evaluated, and recorded differs from state to state. As noted earlier, reporting and evaluation schemes vary dramatically throughout the region. To a large extent, these data are an aggregation of what the region’s CRED program leaders are comfortable with in their respective responses. Because of this additional screening and the inherent problems associated with evaluating community and economic development, the regional data aggregated in this document likely underreport actual impacts.

What this CRED exercise in regional logic models and subsequent reporting has clearly demonstrated is the need for better reporting communication and evaluation resources on a multistate basis. Most states simply cannot afford the cost of unique reporting systems or evaluation techniques to accommodate such a relatively small component within their institutions. The data “leakage” associated with CRED bears its own opportunity cost, however. Many of the indices listed on the North Central Region’s CRED logic model are also key performance indicators for our host institutions, their governing boards, and the USDA. Would it not be a wise return on an investment to develop better evaluation and recording systems that would increase the number of jobs created, businesses started, grants awarded, or funds leveraged?

Compiled Regional Data

CRED systems in the North Central Region do not create jobs, build infrastructure, develop housing, nor create start-up businesses. We educate. We provide analytical and applied research services for better local decision making. We help develop local leaders and public officials through the training. The data discussed below reflect the benefits derived from Extension clients’ utilization of our CRED education and research.

As each state reports on its success through community development programs and projects, several important implications are notable regarding the impact of Extension within the North Central Region (Table 1). The following are some of the more significant impacts:

Minority Participation Increased
During the course of the year reported (2009), minority participation in CRED programming increased by more than 17,000, representing 87 communities across the region.

New Leadership Roles Assumed
CRED programs continue to make a significant effort toward developing community leaders across the region. More than 1,200 participants of these programs indicated that they had taken on new leadership roles as a result of their training.

Plans Developed and Adopted
Over the years, Extension CRED programs have made concerted efforts to promote both strategic and comprehensive planning in communities and substate regions. In
the 2009 reporting period, more than 325 communities within the region developed local plans with the assistance of CRED Extension. During that same period, almost 475 communities adopted plans developed during that period or from prior years.

**Jobs Created and Retained**
With only half the states in region reporting, CRED Extension helped to create or retain almost 5,300 jobs within the North Central Region.

**Volunteerism Generated**
It is not unusual for communities to generate volunteerism as a means of promoting local community and economic development. Extension CRED activities generated almost 1.3 million volunteer hours. Using either state volunteer dollar-value guidelines or the associated value of special trades or professions, the total value of this volunteer time exceeded $24 million in the region.

**Programs Initiated**
More than 1,650 distinct programs or activities were initiated by eight states in the region in 2009. The total estimated value of these programs to the communities and clients served by the region’s CRED units exceeded $16.6 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data item</th>
<th>Outcome and Impact</th>
<th>Number of states reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minority participation–no. of participants</td>
<td>17,275</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority participation–no. of communities</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities taken</td>
<td>1,218</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of plans developed</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of plans adopted</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar value of plans adopted</td>
<td>$4,213,600</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of plans/goals implemented</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of jobs created</td>
<td>3,415</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of jobs retained</td>
<td>1,872</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer hours generated</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar value of volunteer hours</td>
<td>$24,038,948</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programs/activities initiated</td>
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<td>Dollar value of program/activity</td>
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<td>Dollar value of grants generated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dollar value of resources leveraged/generated</td>
<td>$727,238,794</td>
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Grants Generated
This category includes grants awarded to the Extension systems or our CRED partners as a result of Extension programming. The eight states reporting indicated that CRED activity leveraged an additional $44.5 million in sponsored or external grants and contracts.

Dollar Value of Resources Generated or Leveraged
In many respects, this indicator provides an estimate of the aggregate value of CRED impacts on communities and regions within the north central area. These data include the value associated with community public works projects, business investment, housing development, new organizations, etc. Six states were able to report more than $72 billion in impact value during their 2009 reporting period.

Great strides in increased diversity, participation, jobs, volunteerism, and dollars saved are shown throughout the region. For example, “Dollar value of plans developed” equals $4,213,600. This number represents the money that communities saved by using Extension, based on the cost of the same services if procured through the private sector. In many cases, the ability of smaller, rural communities to access these types of services through Extension represents their only option. They simply cannot afford private consulting.

As reported earlier, some regional indices listed on the logic models were not reported due to insufficient data or problems in definition. While the regional impacts of CRED programming in the North Central Region are impressive, it is important to note that these data likely only a fraction of actual program impacts.
Examples of Multistate Programming

The data compiled reveal a trend of multistate programming. CRED programs in the region found greater opportunity to make positive impacts on their region when they partnered with programs in neighboring states; in essence, they were able to do more with more by working together instead of utilizing resources solely from within their own states. The CRED program leaders compiled three cases of multistate programming to demonstrate how successful community development occurred through Extension in the North Central Region: the Horizons Program, the NC Sustainable Communities Task Force, and the Great Plains Marketing Rural Communities Program.

Horizons

Scope of Project/Program
Time frame: 2003–present
Geography: North Central Region and Pacific Northwest

Partners
Extension in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington, along with the Northwest Area Foundation

Target Clientele
Small rural and tribal communities (populations less than 5,000) faced with economic decline and demographic change.

Project Description
Horizons is a community leadership program aimed at reducing poverty. Through the Horizons program, communities:

- Explore perceptions about sources of poverty and prosperity;
- Build stronger community leadership;
- Identify and leverage community assets in program activities;
- Utilize consulting and technical support to achieve their goals; and
- Manage up to $10,000 in grant funding to sustain community development efforts.

Impacts
Horizons is funded by the Northwest Area Foundation (NWAF) and delivered by Extension in seven1 of eight states in the NWAF region. Since 2003, 152 communities in four north central states—Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota—have completed the Horizons program.

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1Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington.
“Horizons is not a magical contraption. It is an honest approach at opening people’s eyes to what is around them...”

— South Dakota Horizons community member

Each of the fifteen South Dakota communities that comprise the Horizons 3 cohort convened small groups of people to engage in deliberate dialogue about the causes of and strategies to combat poverty. Across these fifteen communities, nearly 580 people participated in this study process and developed short-term action plans. Although each community independently identified projects of local importance, five broad areas emerged as action areas across the entire state: 1) Resource Centers—including food pantries, emergency funds, transportation, etc.; 2) Community Beautification—shining up Main Street to rally community pride; 3) Youth Activities—investing time, energy, and money in local youth; 4) Economic Development—creating living-wage jobs in the local economy; 5) Local Food—providing a market for locally grown, healthy food. (These focal areas are typical of communities in other states.)

Through these honest conversations, community members have embraced their interdependence and developed collaborative solutions. In the words of another South Dakota community member, “We knew we had to unite and help our town survive. ...I feel that our future looks a lot brighter since we started [Horizons], and that is because we are working together to make that happen.”

Emerging research from Ben Winchester, research fellow at the University of Minnesota Extension, demonstrates that young, well-educated families are moving from urban to rural places—the “brain gain.” Horizons communities welcome these newcomers with open arms. In McClusky, North Dakota (and several other communities around the region), a Welcome Wagon volunteer delivers special coupons, local directories, and homemade goodies to new residents—bridging the divide that often isolates rural newcomers from old timers.

“It’s been so gratifying to see elected and established leaders get to know and willingly come together to work with new, emerging community leaders on projects that make a difference in communities...”

— North Dakota Horizons regional coach

A survey of Minnesota LeadershipPlenty® participants (n=322) indicated that 61% of participants intend to use their newly acquired skills to involve more parts of the community in making decisions. Another 80% wish to see their community gain a greater understanding of its strengths as a result of LeadershipPlenty.*

Upon the cornerstones of a shared community vision and expanded leadership capacity, communities move to larger-scale, sustainable action. Many communities have articulated longer-term solutions to poverty, including expanded educational opportunities, job training, and local economic development. The tangible outcomes of these efforts will be measured in years, not months. In the interim, communities are building links to regional resources to ameliorate the effects of poverty.
In Hoffman, Minnesota, a highly engaged Horizons group has led an initiative to revitalize Main Street, which now includes a galleria where 29 different merchants share administrative and staffing duties and, most recently, a health-care mall that will combat the rural health care deficit and provide local work opportunities for skilled health care workers.

Nearly 60% of students in Hamburg, Iowa, qualify for free or reduced lunches. The local Horizons group engaged multiple partners in a creative project to address youth hunger. Working together with regional funders and a food bank, the Horizons group sends 80–90 backpacks full of food home with hungry students each Friday.

An evaluation of the Horizons 2 cohort indicated that “Horizons is a complicated, difficult program model, [is] successfully implemented, and [is] viewed as a positive, tested, systematic long-term process by communities.” Indeed, across all seven participating states, 87% of Horizons communities2 believe they are “better off” because of the program and a full 90% would participate again. Further, the evaluators note that the study circles process is “widely perceived as a valuable model for community problem solving” and continues to be used in communities to facilitate conversations around other difficult topics.

“And right now we’re discussing how we’re going to start our Study Groups again and go through and train and teach another whole set of people to be able to understand the leadership principles because it’s been so valuable with us.”

— Minnesota Horizons community member

Due in part to Horizons programming, well over half of panel study communities indicate that there is “more openness, more communication, and more opportunities for input in community decisions.” When facing difficult decisions and in times of emergency, Horizons training has proven valuable to these communities.

“…our particular community was hit with quite a bit of flooding. And during the flood we saw a lot of the things that we talked about in the Horizons actually kick into gear. People took leadership roles.”

— Iowa Horizons community member

With assistance from Extension units across the region, Horizons communities have a heightened awareness of the power of shared leadership in pursuit of a more vibrant future.

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2Sample includes Horizons communities from cohort ending June 2008. Full evaluation data not yet available for cohort ending April 2010.
Sustainable Community Task Force

Scope of Project/Program
Time frame: 2009–present
Geography: North Central Region

Partners
Twelve members of the North Central Sustainable Communities Task Force (NCSCTF)

Target Clientele
Community leaders

Project Description
The task force is working toward organization and execution of its charge of building Extension’s capacity to do work (research and programming) related to sustainable communities. The group agreed on the following working definition and principles of sustainable communities:

Sustainable communities are those that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Effective community leaders are those who make decisions based on the interconnected dimensions of the environment, society, and economy.

The following principles are associated with sustainable communities:

1. Inclusive
2. Long term
3. Interconnected
4. Multidimensional
5. Holistic
6. Multi-scale (site, neighborhood, region)

NCSCTF’s work in sustainable communities will include a decision-making model for community leaders based on the following filters:

1. Natural resources (air, water, plants and animals)
2. Energy
3. Food systems
4. Mobility
5. Design and development of the built environment
6. Regional economy
7. Community capacity (knowledge)
8. Public health

**Impacts**
The curriculum is still under development and will be posted through e-Extension.

**Marketing Rural Communities to Attract and Retain Workers**

**Scope of Project/Program**
Time frame: September 1, 2008–August 31, 2012
Geography: Northern Great Plains

**Partners Involved in Project/Program**
CRED Extension systems from Nebraska, Kansas, North Dakota and South Dakota

**External Funding Sources Leverage**
USDA NIFA – AFRI program - $498,558

**Target Clientele**
The aggregate results obtained from the evaluation of specific recruitment strategies will be made available to policy makers and local development interests in the form of best practice recommendations for rural locales. These recommendations will be of immediate value to rural communities and regions that are characterized by economic growth levels that are not sustainable given current rates of labor force growth.

**Project Description**

*Evaluation Methods and/or Reporting Methods Used to Collect Impact Data*
Two surveys have been conducted in each of six participating communities. Surveys of new residents resulted in 419 returned questionnaires, while an accompanying survey of employers on labor vacancy returned 145 questionnaires. Analysis of the resulting data is continuing, and a reporting format utilizing both print and electronic media has been developed and approved.

**Objectives**
This integrated, multistate rural development project will further the long-term goal of building a diversified workforce to meet present and future needs in rural areas by enhancing the ability of rural communities to attract and retain new workforce members.

The primary research objective is to test the efficacy of community-based, market driven residential recruitment strategies in meeting the workforce requirements of employers
in rural portions of the Northern Great Plains. This will be accomplished through the scientific evaluation of local residential recruitment strategies using principals derived from previous National Resources Institute (NRI) research on residential preferences.

The project will include the unique combination of: 1) rural community stakeholders as partners in a participatory research model, 2) the application of marketing concepts to the problem of workforce development, 3) Extension education focused on the design and evaluation of recruitment and retention strategies, and 4) the use of the Internet as a marketing tool for residential recruitment and retention.

These recommendations will be of immediate value to rural communities and regions that are characterized by economic growth levels that are not sustainable given current rates of labor force growth. The project will add value to community and economic development activities by addressing the population and labor force requirements for sustainable prosperity.

The primary objective will be accomplished through a series of related steps, including:

1. The formation of partnerships with stakeholder groups in selected communities in three states as part of a participatory research and development model;
2. Identification of the workforce issues and recruitment strategies unique to each partner community;
3. The compilation of detailed, consumer oriented information from households that have chosen to relocate within the laborshed of partner communities;
4. Development and evaluation of high impact, consumer driven community marketing models appropriate to both workforce recruitment and retention;
5. Development of informal educational curricula that will support the success and replication of such local efforts;
6. Development of a first-of-its-kind graduate course in workforce recruitment and retention that is aimed at community development professionals, especially in the Great Plains.

Impacts Reported 2008-09 to 2009-10
Participants in the site community where presentation materials were tested were able to identify a significant challenge of retaining new residents and have begun a process of identifying ways in which that challenge might be addressed. Similar local responses are expected at other research sites.
EMERGING ISSUES

In February 2008 the North Central CRED Program Leaders met in Perry, Iowa, at the Iowa State University College of Design Town/Craft Center for a roundtable session to set the stage for future program planning. Invited speakers included David Sanger, New York Times White House correspondent, Martin Holdridge, senior economist at Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., Andy Isserman, professor of regional economics and public policy at the University of Illinois, Doug Johnston, chair and professor of landscape architecture at Iowa State University, and Ryan Allen, assistant professor of urban and regional planning at University of Minnesota.

Subsequent discussion based upon the presentations by the aforementioned speakers and others led the NC CRED program leaders to articulate likely emerging issues for both CRED research and Extension programming. These issues included:

- Demographic, social and economic changes associated with new immigrants
- The movement toward sustainable and “green” communities
- The impacts and changing economies associated with green industries and the bioeconomy
- Health and safety issues including healthy community design
- The future of Extension and how it will address growing urban, suburban, and increasingly diverse populations
- Housing issues related to the economic recession
- Better criteria to measure rural prosperity
- Identification and measurement of best practices in economic development, including entrepreneurship, workforce development and regional development
- Development of models for better local government and governance

While the aforementioned continue to be considered emerging issues, the region’s CRED units have taken steps to address a number of them. Regional initiatives are underway in sustainable community development and new immigrant community and business development since the Perry meeting. The new immigrant business initiative involves the representatives from the Federal Reserve Banks within the region. The north central CRED program units are joining with the Fed and Extension specialists in finance literacy to develop joint programming related to business management, entrepreneurship, and personal finance, subjects that are often closely related among new immigrant families starting businesses in the Midwest.

Collectively, the NC CRED programs are also beginning to address the growing trend toward regional approaches to development. The University of Missouri and the Ohio State University are working in conjunction with the USDA-RD on developing a new curriculum for regional economic development programming.
APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY RESOURCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Communities across the country are facing uncertain times. Some must deal with burgeoning populations where the number of residents is outgrowing available space and new land use rules need to be developed. Others watch hopefully as older populations die off and younger members of the community flee to greener occupational pastures. In some cases, community leaders find their regions withering on the vines in the wake of the collapse of one type or another of industry.

They need help, and they know it. But it’s all new to them, and they don’t know exactly where to turn. They consider searching for new industries, but they know many other regions are courting the same companies. They think of hiring some kind of guru to divine a new pathway to fortune. They apply for grants that may not be awarded and may not produce much if they do arrive. Change in the way the world operates has gone beyond the proverbial “constant.” It is occurring at a rapid pace, continually creating new challenges for communities to maintain vibrant local economies and high quality of life.

Cooperative Extension, a leader for generations in research-based education, is a valuable partner for leaders and citizens dealing with such issues affecting their communities. Extension’s community resource and economic development programs recognize community as the focal point where people can feel a sense of personal involvement, take pride in their actions, and together with their neighbors and other community members, position themselves for a prosperous and secure future.

The official name for these programs varies from state to state and even within Extension’s framework. But nationally, the words that truly describe the concept have become the official name: Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED). CRED educational programs respond to local needs and opportunities, drawing upon university expertise to provide information, strategies, and relevant education to help people take control over their future. These program are developed and often delivered in partnership with local groups, local government, community organizations, individuals and agencies which have a stake in the economic and social future of the community.
What is economic and community development?

CRED professionals view economic development in broad terms that include many forms of business activity such as manufacturing, retail, services, tourism, healthcare, as well as workforce development and other forms of activity that increase jobs and income in a community. Community development is viewed from a broad perspective that includes economic development as well as housing, education, recreation, civic organizations, leadership development, religious organizations and others. And community development involves attention to inclusion and who is engaged and how the community will sustain itself in all of its aspects. Community development includes quality of place aspects—education and recreation among them—that are not strictly limited to jobs and income.

Who are these programs for?

CRED programs are designed for specific types of audiences, including local government officials, economic development professionals, other public officials, a wide array of other local leaders, small businesses and industries. The programs and the professionals who administer them endeavor to foster partnerships that link universities to local stakeholders, government agencies, businesses and organizations to deliver the highest quality programs.

As with the Cooperative Extension System, Community Resource and Economic Development programs are based on values and principles that provide the foundation upon which effective programs for strategic goals and action are implemented. CRED core values include equal opportunity, self-determination, jobs and healthy economies, safe communities, fairness and the common good.

The bottom line is that in practice, CRED programs use partnerships and inclusive participation by stakeholders to address critical issues of concern to individuals, families and communities, including social, environmental, economic and other issues affecting people's lives.

Program themes and program thrusts

Community development is a process that builds the capacity of local residents to work together to improve social and economic conditions in their communities. Community development only can occur where there is community action. CRED programs propagate purposive action for developing and maintaining viable and sustainable communities through research-based information and technical assistance. They frequently include local leadership training to help community leaders understand social decision-making processes and to increase their skills in helping the community respond appropriately.
Specific types of programming vary from state to state, but all reflect a core set of three program thrusts, namely building economically viable communities, renewing civic engagement and enhancing community decision-making and governance.

1. **Building economically viable communities**

   *Creates entrepreneurs and business-friendly communities* by nurturing new locally based businesses that draw on the assets, talents and needs of the community that are critical for local economic development. Just as “it takes a village to raise a child,” it takes a community to support budding entrepreneurs and businesses.

   *Develops e-commerce opportunities* through global marketing and export of goods and services, which requires the use of the Internet. Effective non-profit and governmental operations also demand appropriate use of electronic resources.

   *Fosters community sustainability* through viable communities that can be sustained socially, environmentally and economically. This entails attention to development of green industries, local food systems, natural resource enhancement and environmental stewardship efforts in addition to working effectively with public and private entities and paying attention to issues of equity and justice.

   *Collaborates to build regional economies* by understanding that communities do not exist in a vacuum and necessarily are part of larger regional systems. Viability has been shown to be linked to working collaboratively as a region to maximize resources and opportunities and to develop regional economies synergistically.

   *Nurture community and individual assets* through asset-based development by promoting opportunities on the basis of one’s strengths and potential that can provide competitive advantage as well as a foundation for success. Wealth creation and retention require attention to developing the financial assets of individuals, families, organizations, businesses, communities and regions.

2. **Renewing civic engagement**

   *Develops innovative, collaborative leadership activities and training* because communities consistently deal with a host of issues that demand shared leadership skills in the midst of increasing complexity, diversity and change.

   *Engages new populations in community actions.* An influx of new residents can create a stronger and richer local fabric of community, but also has the potential of creating harmful conflict if newcomers are not engaged or integrated into the society.

   *Expands civic engagement through the process of public deliberation,* which requires greater skills for listening to multiple perspectives and purposefully deliberating and weighing multiple choices for managing conflict and creating effective solutions as public issues become more complex and polarized.
Devises and strengthens community organizations into effective and diverse community groups that comprise the civic infrastructure of communities, many of which rely on volunteers and require nurturing through board training, planning and other aspects to successfully contribute to the local social, economic and environmental sustainability.

3. Enhancing community decision-making and governance

Facilitates community planning and the process of implementing plans through thinking and planning strategically which is critical to sustaining the community. The process of engaging residents and others affected by the plan is tantamount to building ownership and successful implementation.

Helps communities understand and deal with changes by analyzing, interpreting and sharing information and data coupled with exploration of alternatives essential to understanding and managing the various changes facing today’s communities.

Determines land-use patterns and their relationships to sustainable development as a way of using limited physical space and its effects on the economy, aesthetics and environment regardless of whether the community is dealing with growth or decline. The future depends on thinking strategically.

How do I bring such programs to my community?

Contact your state’s Cooperative Extension system to learn more about the programming and resources available in your area. Call your county Cooperative Extension office.

Consider Extension as a potential partner or resource for community and economic development activities occurring in your community.

Let your local legislators know that you support Extension’s educational programming in the area of Community Resource and Economic Development.

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APPENDIX B

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

COMMUNITY RESOURCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOGIC MODELS
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Program Action - Logic Model

**Inputs**
- What we invest
  - Staff
  - Volunteers
  - Time
  - Money
  - Research base
  - Materials
  - Equipment
  - Facilities
  - Technology
  - Partners
  - Leveraged resources

**Outputs**
- What we do
  - Develop a planning and advisory group
  - Develop and deliver curricula, workshops, retreats, field trips, etc.
  - Assessment tools
  - Coach advisory committees, presenters and participants
  - Evaluate the program

**Who we reach**
- Who we support
  - Emerging and existing adult and/or youth leaders reflecting community demographics and sectors, and underserved residents

**Outcomes - Impact**
- What the short term results are
  - Learning
    - Increased leadership knowledge, skills and confidence
  - Action
    - Increased degree of engagement in leadership activities

- What the medium term results are
  - Leaders use complex networking skills to sustain organizations and communities
  - Increased collaboration across/among groups

**Assumptions**
- Black text individual outputs and outcomes
- Italicized text community (collective) outputs and outcomes

**Evaluation**
Focus—Collect Data—Analyze and Interpret—Report
- Increased diversity and inclusion: no. of participants & communities
- No. participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken
- No. of plans developed and adopted & dollar value of plans
- Percent of plans/goals implemented, attained, & legally adopted
- No. of jobs created &/or retained and their attributed dollar value
- Volunteer hours generated and attributed dollar value
- Programs and activities initiated/completed and attributed dollar value
- Efficiencies or dollars saved
- Dollar value of grants and resources leveraged/generated

**Priorities**
- Increasing the capacity of existing and emerging leaders to contribute to community vitality in all sectors of community
- Community leadership is critical to community viability and sustainability.

**Situation**
- Communities consistently deal with a host of issues that demand leadership in a contemporary arena of increasing complexity.

**Conditions**
- Increased leadership diversity
- Increased civic engagement
- Sustained leadership programs
- Increased viability of community/ability to deal with change
- Increased community action catalyzed, creating other organizations
PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITY PLANNING
Program Action - Logic Model

Inputs
Activities
Participation
Outcomes - Impact
Short Term
Medium Term
Long Term

Situation
Communities need assistance with rapidly changing social, economic, & environmental landscape. Residents need to be empowered to take charge of their futures by analyzing and addressing their quality of life and infrastructure.

Priorities
What we invest
Inclusion
Facuity, time, community leaders and volunteers, outside expertise, information, money, materials, meeting space

What we do
Coordination & collaboration among partners, facilitate planning processes, asset mapping, analyze community information, develop action plans, organize implementation

Who we reach
Community steering committee, workshop participants, project team members, community volunteers, media, youth

What the short term results are
Learning
Knowledge and skills for planning.
Development of plan.
Increased participation and diversity

What the medium term results are
Action
Increased partnerships & more effective use of resources
Plan adoption and implementation
Increased community mobilization of volunteers
Formation of new social networks and/or systems

What the ultimate impact(s) is
Conditions
Evidence of goal attainment
Increased capacity for future issues.
Increased dollar value of public and private investment.

Evaluation
Focus—Collect Data—Analyze and Interpret—Report
• Increased diversity and inclusion: no. of participants & communities
• No. participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken
• No. of plans developed and adopted & dollar value of plans
• Percent of plans/goals implemented, attained, & legally adopted
• No. of jobs created &/or retained and their attributed dollar value

Volunteer hours generated and attributed dollar value
• Programs and activities initiated/completed and attributed dollar value
• Efficiencies or dollars saved
• Dollar value of grants and resources leveraged/generated
and justice for all

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