Strategic Directions for Extension
Community Resource and Economic Development

March 2009

Report prepared with support from USDA – CSREES and the Southern Rural Development Center
Strategic Directions for Extension
Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED)

Community Resource and Economic Development Mission Statement:
Cooperative Extension CRED programming helps create vibrant and sustainable communities
thriving in a dynamic environment of change

March 2009

Report prepared with support from USDA – CSREES
and the Southern Rural Development Center
Creating clear strategic directions for Extension programming in Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) is essential to strengthening and marketing programs and expanding resources and partnerships critical to working with communities. This document establishes a unified voice across the country that includes the array of Land-Grant Institutions and USDA Cooperative States Research Extension and Education Services (CSREES). The vision and strategic directions articulate the values and beliefs upon which programs are based, clarify the recipients and educational goals, define the issues, and explore new directions.

CRED’s Essential Role

CRED programs are essential in this period of remarkable change for communities across the country. Even the smallest communities are influenced daily by global trends. As change accelerates, alternative approaches to community development are needed to help people and communities address their diverse issues and situations.

CRED programs respond to local needs and opportunities. CRED educational programs are developed and often delivered in partnership with participants and “stakeholders” — organizations, individuals, and agencies with a stake in the existence and content of programs and the resources that support these programs.

Target audiences for CRED programs include local government officials, economic development professionals, other public officials, the wide array of other local leaders, small businesses and industries, community-based organizations, and the general public. CRED professionals foster broad partnerships that link universities to local stakeholders, government agencies, businesses, and organizations to help create vibrant and sustainable communities.

Educational programs addressing community needs and opportunities frequently include local leadership training, economic development, public policy issues education, land-use planning, the concepts of shared decision-making and consensus building, and the access to, and use of, information technologies. CRED helps community leaders understand social decision-making processes.
Core Values and Guiding Principles

The values and principles upon which CRED programs are based distinguish the Cooperative Extension System as a leader in research-based education. Community is 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 foundational values and principles upon which effective CRED programs are built include democratic and inclusive participation, building capacity on the basis of community assets, collaboration across and within communities, and sustainability.

CRED Vision

CRED programs support and enhance vibrant and sustainable communities that thrive in a rapidly changing world. These communities are the result of a committed, high quality, and integrated Land-Grant University network of education and research resources and professionals.

Program Themes

Vibrant and dynamic communities are the result of building core capacities in community systems for decision-making, developing leadership, engaging citizens and residents in community issues, and organizing groups and communities for effective work.

Based on an inventory of the CRED work in which Land-Grant Institutions across the United States are engaging to address local needs and opportunities, three major themes emerged—

- Building Economically Viable Communities;
- Renewing Civic Engagement; and
- Enhancing Community Decision-making and Governance.

Within each of these program themes, we uncovered significant and appropriate diversity in programming efforts, focus on issues, and resulting community actions.

Strategic Imperatives for a Strong and Sustainable CRED Program

Focusing on five key strategies is essential to the Cooperative Extension System and CRED if we are to successfully move forward and have significant impact in the future.

1. **Speak with a more unified voice.** We must ensure a national message and unified voice based on common program thrusts that impact state and federal decision-makers and build advocates.
2. **Improve marketing.** We must expand our use of outcome measures to market CRED programs and develop increased financial and political support.

3. **Develop and enhance partnerships.** We must strengthen and develop robust partnerships to ensure that CRED programs more effectively and efficiently achieve the goal of building more vibrant communities based on research and experience, objectivity and neutrality, and community-centered engagement.

4. **Improve program development and delivery.** Resource demands and increased complexity of issues mandate that we seek to develop relevant and responsive programs and deliver them in the most effective ways for our communities and stakeholders.

5. **Support evaluation and research for CRED programs.** Rigorous program evaluation and investment in research that underpins our programs are critical factors in our growth and sustainability. Further improvements in this area will ensure we are both using our collective resources as efficiently as possible (and indeed are acting like a system) as well as strengthening the foundations upon which our work is based and to which we respond.

**Conclusion**

CRED programs, as well as Cooperative Extension System (CES) programs in general, must intrinsically address current and emerging needs and opportunities in a complex global environment for our communities. In moving to respond to the issues addressed in this plan, the CES must be increasingly vigilant, alert, collaborative, responsive, and accountable.

This *Strategic Directions* document is intended to help the CES and CRED professionals work from a common framework of collaboration, learning and communication. As CRED professionals we must strive to implement programs by utilizing every facet of the CES and its constituents, allies, and supporters, and recognize that CRED has the potential to under gird and link with other CES Base Programs—and to serve as a key link to many effective groups outside the System—as we serve our local communities.
Strategic Directions for Extension
Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED)

Weaving a Prosperous Future for Communities

I. Preface/Acknowledgements

In May of 2006, CSREES hosted a gathering of Cooperative Extension program leadership representing work in the area of Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) from the array of Land-Grant Institutions and the Regional Rural Development Centers. The intention of this gathering was to bring the Extension community and economic development programs together for the purpose of understanding shared interests and to develop a unified voice to grow broader understanding and support for CRED programs in Extension. As a result of that meeting a National Leadership Council for Community Development in Extension, referred to as the CRED Leadership Council in this report, was formed to establish a communication network among CRED Extension leadership and to implement its work through four work groups representing: program thrusts, professional development, partnerships, and growing support for CRED.

The CRED Leadership Council indicated its desire to have a strategic plan that would include:

- Creating a national message and unified voice based on common program thrusts to impact state and federal decision-makers and build advocates;
- Marketing CRED programs to increase financial and political support;
- Using needs assessments and other outcomes measures to help market CRED programs and partner with other organizations; and
- Developing partnerships to help CRED programs more effectively and efficiently achieve their goal of building more vibrant communities.

The CRED Leadership Council and its workgroups reported on these activities at an open meeting for all CRED program leadership following the 2007 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) meetings in Philadelphia. As an outgrowth, a special work team was convened in October 2007 to develop a “Strategic Directions for CRED” document that would address the four goals originally set out by the CRED Leadership Council in 2006.

The strategic directions workgroup* met in St. Paul in October of 2007 and used the output of the

* The strategic directions workgroup included representation from the four 1862 Land Grant regions, the 1890 Region, 1994 Land Grant institutions, CSREES, Regional Rural Development Centers, NACDEP liaisons, and the past president of NACDEP. The CRED Leadership Council acknowledges the contributions of the following members of the strategic directions workgroup and supporting colleagues: Bo Beaulieu, Cindy Bigger, Thomas Blewett, Gae Broadwater, Michelle Eley, Mary Emery, Susan Fey, Neal Flora, Susan Given-Seymour, Jessica Hale, Lorie Higgins, Tim Kelsey, Sally Maggard, Jeri Marxman, Richard Maurer, Bill McMaster, Mary Simon Leuci, Julie Stewart, Kay Lynn Testlemon, Deborah Tootle, and Walt Whitmer.

The work group was facilitated by Mary Ann Hennen and Kim Boyce from the University of Minnesota Extension. Financial support for the strategic directions workgroup meeting was provided by CSREES through the Southern Rural Development Center with special thanks to Alan Barefield and Kathleen Ibdelah at the SRDC.
four CRED Leadership Council workgroups as a starting point for developing a first draft of the “Strategic Directions for CRED” document. This group also developed initial recommendations for the CRED Leadership Council to consider with respect to a process for gathering input from across all CRED professionals in Land-Grant Extension programs for the final version of this document.

**Strategic Directions—An Overview**

This document is intended to create a basis for common understanding about the work of CRED Extension professionals and to support communication and education of existing and potential supporters including senior Extension leadership, CSREES partners, other state and federal partners, as well as the local communities that are served by CRED.

**II. Introduction—What is CRED?**

Each state calls its work in community resource and economic development by a name that fits its tradition. In order to speak in a unified voice across the country, we are using Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) as the umbrella name nationally.

There are many different program names and acronyms relating to community and economic development work in Extension. For purposes of promoting understanding and support for such Extension work, it is important to be able to communicate a brand identity at the national level around which common message points can be developed and shared. We see an opportunity to agree that community and economic development Extension professionals can communicate across all institutions in a network identified as ‘CRED.’

The common element to all the efforts – and virtually all of the organizational unit names – is “community.” In Extension’s Community Resource and Economic Development program area, community most often refers to a geographic place, but has also been viewed in some programs from the perspective of a community of interest. In such cases, the focus of the work and the unit of analysis is the community as a whole, as a system of interdependent components. Viewed from a holistic perspective, the community is comprised of a dynamic interaction between individuals, groups, organizations and institutions that are both internal and external to the community.

CRED professionals view economic development in broad terms that includes 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 both economic development as well as other important components and constituents of community development such 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 that are not strictly limited to jobs and income.

**What Do CRED Programs Do?**

CRED programs address the needs and opportunities of communities as well as the people and resources within them. Educational programs frequently include local leadership training, economic development, public policy issues education, land-use planning, the concepts of shared decision-making and consensus building, and the access to, and use of, information technologies. CRED helps community leaders understand social decision-making processes. CRED programs are shaped by, and frequently delivered in concert with, many other local and state partners.

CRED educational programs are developed in consultation with participants and are delivered in cooperation with “stakeholders” – organizations, individuals, and agencies with a stake in the existence and content of programs and the resources that support these programs. Audiences for CRED programs include local government officials, economic development professionals, other public officials, the wide array of other local leaders, small businesses and industries, community-based organizations, and the general public. CRED professionals foster broad partnerships that link universities to local stakeholders, government agencies, businesses, and organizations to deliver the highest quality programs.

**III. Core Values/Guiding Principles**

The values and principles upon which CRED programs are based are those that distinguish the Cooperative Extension System as a leader in research-based education. These values and principles provide the foundation upon which effective programs for CRED’s strategic goals and action are implemented.

CRED Core Values include:

- Equal Opportunity;
- Self Determination;
- Jobs & Healthy Economies;
- Safe Communities;
- Fairness; and
- The Common Good.

In practice, this means 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 peoples’ lives.
IV. 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 can occur only where there is community action. The CRED Program provides research-based information and technical assistance to help individuals and communities take purposive action in developing and maintaining viable and sustainable communities.

Although the need for specific types of CRED programming varies across the country, CRED programs typically reflect a core set of program thrusts: (1) building economically viable communities, (2) renewing civic engagement, and (3) enhancing community decision-making and governance. The specific emphasis varies between states and regions, depending upon local needs.

Operationally, these CRED programs are bound by common characteristics, such as the content including relevant research and information, the content and process emphasizing civic engagement, the use of research and evidence-based processes and programs that link issues and stakeholders, the ability to respond to generally place-specific issues in a global context, and the engagement of citizens at political, social, and economic levels.

Examples of these programs include:

I. Building Economically Viable Communities

- Creating entrepreneurs and business friendly communities. Creating new locally based businesses that draw on the assets, talents, and needs of the community will be 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.
- Developing e-commerce opportunities. Global marketing and export of goods and services requires the use of the Internet. Effective nonprofit and governmental operations also demand appropriate use of electronic resources.
- Fostering community sustainability. Viable communities are those 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.
- Collaborating to build regional economies. 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.
- Nurturing community and individual assets through asset-based development. Developing opportunities on the basis of one’s strengths and potential provide competitive advantage
as well as a foundation for success. Wealth creation and retention requires attention to developing the financial assets of individuals, families, organizations, businesses, communities, and regions.

2. Renewing Civic Engagement

- Developing innovative, collaborative leaders though leadership activities and training. Communities consistently deal with a host of issues that demand shared leadership skills in the midst of increasing complexity, diversity and change.

- Engaging new populations in community actions. As communities become more diverse, the engagement and integration of newcomers and existing residents presents challenges and opportunities to reweave a stronger local fabric of community.

- Expanding civic engagement through the process of public deliberation. As public issues become more complex and interwoven and yet more polarized, the skills to listen to multiple perspectives and purposefully deliberate and weigh multiple choices is critical to managing conflict and creating effective solutions.

- Developing and strengthening community organizations. Effective and diverse community organizations comprise the civic infrastructure of communities. Many however, 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

- Facilitating community planning and the process of implementing plans. Thinking and planning strategically for the future 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.

- Helping communities understand and deal with changes. Analysis, interpretation, and sharing of information and data coupled with exploration of alternatives is essential to understanding and managing the various changes facing today’s communities.

- Determining land-use patterns and their relationships to sustainable development. The way we use our limited physical space impacts the economy, aesthetics and environment whether the community is dealing with growth or decline. The future depends on thinking strategically about the future.

V. Strategic Imperatives for the CRED Program

The critical issues of our times argue for an Extension response. These shared program themes are relevant and key to working in the urban, suburban and rural context as well as the interconnection between them. Our programming focuses on communities’ ability to deal with continuous economic, social and environmental changes, and the increasing demand for civic engagement. These programs are critical to dealing with the changing energy and environmental opportunities, use of natural resources and amenities, affordable and available housing, and the demand for addressing health issues.
Likewise, these programs are essential to dealing with the community challenges and opportunities presented by new residents and immigrants. The development of safe communities in the midst of natural disasters and increasing terrorist threats also draws upon the core programming of CRED. It is widely recognized that in order to meet the goals and challenges outlined above, the Cooperative Extension System in general, and the community of CRED professionals in particular, will be called upon to rededicate ourselves to work on five strategies to strengthen our capacity to address community needs, our resources to address key challenges and our credibility among funders:

1. **Speak with a more unified voice.** We must ensure a national message and unified voice based on common program thrusts that impact state and federal decision-makers and build advocates. Accordingly we will need to enhance or develop:
   - A common program area title for communication purposes. We recommend it be Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) as this already has gained some recognition;
   - A strong communication network;
   - An elevator speech that addresses our vision, values and program impacts;
   - Expanded sharing of common programs across states;
   - Multi-state or multi-institutional program planning as appropriate;
   - Common agreement on what we're focusing on and seeking to achieve;
   - Agreement to carry through on national and regional priorities; and
   - Emphasize that we are subject matter specialists, not troubleshooters.

2. **Improve marketing.** We must expand our use of outcome measures to market CRED programs and develop increased financial and political support. As such we need to develop or enhance the way we:
   - Document program impact;
   - Create our system for aggregating program impacts;
   - Brand ourselves and our products;
   - Establish a clearinghouse for marketing materials and impacts; and
   - Implement a coherent plan for sharing program impacts and needs with decision-makers at national, state, institutional, county and community levels.

3. **Develop and enhance partnerships.** We must strengthen and develop robust partnerships to ensure that CRED programs more effectively and efficiently achieve the goal of building more vibrant communities based on research and experience, objectivity and neutrality, and community-centered engagement. To achieve this we must:
   - Survey institutions to identify existing partnerships that can be enhanced; and
   - Share success stories across states.

4. **Improve program development and delivery.** Increased complexity of issues and resource demands mandate that we seek to develop relevant and responsive programs and to deliver them
in the most effective ways for the communities with which we work. Without the successful realization of many of these objectives many of the other issues addressed throughout this document will come to little if any success. We should strive to:

- Develop a process for identifying crosscutting themes and programs;
- Establish a baseline for FTE and increase FTEs committed to CRED programming;
- Increase professional memberships (e.g., NACDEP, CDS, etc.) as a means to increasing professional and ongoing educational development;
- Increase communication between states and counties;
- Establish a clear link between educators, faculty and strategy; and
- Enhance professional development—strengthening our internal capacity requires professional development, improved communication and improved evaluation and impact measures.

5. **Supporting evaluation and research for CRED programs.** Rigorous program evaluation and investment in research that underpins our programs are critical factors in our growth and sustainability. Further improvements in this area will ensure we are both using our collective resources as efficiently as possible (and indeed are acting like a system) as well as strengthening the foundations upon which our work is based and to which we respond. We recommend:

- Developing key indicators for measuring impacts such as—
  - Economic viability (e.g., value added, jobs, dollars leveraged and created); and
  - Civic engagement (e.g., diversity of participation by several criteria, volunteer leverage, leader action, organizational development and action, community impact).
- Collecting impact data (numbers and specific stories that illustrate impact) in national database;
- Cataloging the research base to support CRED programs and provide data supportive of the public value of our work; and
- Supporting additional research and evaluation for CRED programs.

Responsibility for implementing and achieving these Strategic Imperatives falls across the Land Grant system, on a variety of leadership roles and positions. See the Appendix for our recommendations about who can contribute towards this effort, and how.

VI. Meeting These New Challenges

CRED programs in particular, and CES programs in general, must intrinsically address current and emerging needs. We cannot maintain a business-as-usual approach and assume that traditional programs will suffice. In moving to respond to the issues addressed in this plan, CES must be increasingly vigilant, alert, collaborative, responsive, and accountable.

Structuring a meaningful and useful strategic plan is not an easy task. The team that developed **Strategic Directions** has attempted to do so in a fashion that would permit CRED professionals to gain insight into the framework of what is realistically possible. Occasionally, the team also made
suggestions as to what CRED might collectively perceive as desirable. It has not been the intent of the Strategic Directions team to prescribe “the CRED Program.”

The team asks users of this document to consider its objectives and principles and then pursue CRED priorities specific to their locations and situations—while continuing to be attentive to the opportunities we have to make the most effective use possible of the resources we have at our disposal. If the team has a single admonition, it is this:

As you strive to implement CRED programs, never ignore a potential collaborator or resource.
Utilize every facet of the System and its constituents, allies, and supporters, and recognize that CRED has the potential to undergird and link with other CES Base Programs—and to serve as their linkage to many effective groups outside the System.

Finally, as users think about the pragmatic nature of this document and consider its programmatic suggestions, they should not be misled into thinking that the planning team believes it has successfully covered the universe of CRED—past, present, or future. The team has offered the vision that CRED programming helps create vibrant and sustainable communities thriving in a dynamic environment of change. But it has been motivated to draft this document precisely because it does not have all the answers, nor can it confidently predict the future gains and successes to be found in CRED. We offer ideas on roles to be played by those having a stake in the future of Extension CRED work. We leave the discovery and development of new ideas to the many competent CRED professionals working throughout the Cooperative Extension System, with the hope that this document will assist them.
APPENDIX I. Background Resources and References

Rural Development Centers:

Southern Rural Development Center
http://srdc.msstate.edu

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development
http://www.nercrd.psu.edu

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development
http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu

Western Rural Development Center
http://extension.usu.edu/WRDC/

Creating Vibrant Communities in the South: Training Resources for Building Community Development Skills. Southern Rural Development Center.


Strengthening Communities: Strategic Directions for Community Resources and Economic Development Programs – September 2001.

Economic and Community Development Issues and Priorities for Extension and Research: A Survey of Extension Professionals in the Northeast.
http://www.nercrd.psu.edu/Publications/rdppapers.html

http://www.nercrd.psu.edu/Publications/rdppapers.html

## Strategic Imperative 1. Speak with a More Unified Voice

| ROLES | ACTIONS | SUPPORT CRED | NAME RECOGNITION | AGREE TO USE CRED NAME | USE CRED NAME WITH PROGRAMS | AGREE TO CRED IDENTIFY | RECEIVE CRED IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION | ADOPT USE OF CRED FOR PROGRAM IDENTITIES | SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATE CRED IDENTITIES | USE IN COMMUNICATIONS | STRONG COMMUNICATION NETWORK | ESTABLISH NATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORK | SUPPORT COMMUNICATION NETWORK | ESTABLISH NATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORK | ACTIVE PARTICIPATION | HELP RESOURCE COMMUNICATION NETWORK | PARTICIPATE IN NETWORK FOR NETWORKING | NATIONAL PROGRAM LEADERS SUPPORT NETWORKING | SUPPORT NETWORK FOR PROGRAM SHARING | SUPPORT EXTENSION AND OTHER PROGRAM LINKS | MULTISTATE OR MULTI-INSTITUTION PROGRAM PLANNING | SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN PLANNING | LEADERSHIP ON MULTISTATE OR MULTI-INSTITUTION PLANNING | ACTIVELY SEEK AND PARTICIPATE ACROSS INSTITUTIONS ON PROGRAMS | ENCOURAGE THROUGH CONFERENCE SESSIONS ON MULTI-INSTITUTION PROGRAMS | SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT | SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT |
|-------|---------|--------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|

### Common Program Area Title for Communication (CRED)

- **PURPOSE**
  - **CRED**
  - **NAME RECOGNITION**
  - **AGREE TO USE CRED NAME**
  - **USE CRED NAME WITH PROGRAMS**
  - **AGREE TO CRED IDENTIFY**
  - **RECEIVE CRED IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION**
  - **ADOPT USE OF CRED FOR PROGRAM IDENTITIES**
  - **SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATE CRED IDENTITIES**
  - **USE IN COMMUNICATIONS**
  - **STRONG COMMUNICATION NETWORK**
  - **ESTABLISH NATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORK**
  - **SUPPORT COMMUNICATION NETWORK**
  - **ESTABLISH NATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORK**
  - **ACTIVE PARTICIPATION**
  - **HELP RESOURCE COMMUNICATION NETWORK**
  - **PARTICIPATE IN NETWORK FOR NETWORKING**
  - **NATIONAL PROGRAM LEADERS SUPPORT NETWORKING**
  - **SUPPORT NETWORK FOR PROGRAM SHARING**
  - **SUPPORT EXTENSION AND OTHER PROGRAM LINKS**
  - **MULTISTATE OR MULTI-INSTITUTION PROGRAM PLANNING**
  - **SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN PLANNING**
  - **LEADERSHIP ON MULTISTATE OR MULTI-INSTITUTION PLANNING**
  - **ACTIVELY SEEK AND PARTICIPATE ACROSS INSTITUTIONS ON PROGRAMS**
  - **ENCOURAGE THROUGH CONFERENCE SESSIONS ON MULTI-INSTITUTION PROGRAMS**
  - **SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
  - **SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### Elevator Speech

- **VISION, VALUES, IMPACTS**
  - **DEVELOP ELEVATOR SPEECH**
  - **SHARE ELEVATOR SPEECH**
  - **COMMUNICATE WITH PROGRAM PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS**
  - **RECEIVE AND/OR SUPPORT USE OF ELEVATOR SPEECH**
  - **LEARN THROUGH ELEVATOR SPEECH POST ELEVATOR SPEECH EXCERPTS TO IDENTIFY CRED**
  - **SHARE AMONG NATIONAL PROGRAM LEADERS**

### Expand Sharing Common Programs

- **REASONABLE COST SHARING MEANS TO SHARE REVIEWED PROGRAMS**
  - **ACTIVELY SHARE PROGRAM MATERIALS**
  - **SUPPORT LEARNING ACROSS INSTITUTIONS AND OVERCOME COST BARRIERS**
  - **ESTABLISH PROGRAM COLLABORATIONS**
  - **PROVIDE FORUM FOR PROGRAM SHARING**
  - **SUPPORT EXTENSION AND OTHER PROGRAM LINKS**

### Agreement on National and Regional Priorities

- **DEVELOP FORUM FOR AGREEMENT LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING AGREEMENT**
  - **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE WHEN RELEVANT LOCALLY**
  - **SUPPORT WITH ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES MAY HELP IDENTIFY PRIORITIES GIVE EMPHASIS TO AT NATIONAL MEETINGS**
  - **SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATE SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATE**

---

**Strategic Imperative 1. Speak with a More Unified Voice**

To improve our collective communication, we have identified several key roles and actions that can help us articulate our priorities more effectively. The table below outlines these roles and the corresponding actions and support credits needed to ensure a strong, unified voice.

- **Leadership Council**: Provides strategic guidance and support in developing and communicating program priorities.
- **Program Administrators**: Help identify key program priorities and align them with national and regional goals.
- **May Help Identify Key Program Priorities**: Supports with locally relevant activities that align with national and regional initiatives.
- **Support National and Regional Programs**: Supports program planning and development, ensuring resources and activities are aligned with national and regional priorities.
- **Program Planning**: Actively seeks and participates across institutions on program development.
- **Help Craft Appropriate Message**: Articulates the message in a way that resonates with all stakeholders.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Provides a forum for crafting the message, ensuring it is clear and compelling.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Ensures the message is appropriate for all audiences and institutions.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Provides feedback and support for the message development process.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Supports the opportunity for development, ensuring the message is actionable and effective.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Provides a platform for networking and collaboration among national program leaders.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Supports extension and other program links, fostering a strong network of collaboration.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Encourages and supports staff participation in multi-state multi-institution programs.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Acts as a catalyst for identifying priorities and emphasizing their importance at national meetings.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Supports the opportunity for discussion and development, ensuring that all voices are heard.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Provides a forum for networking and collaboration, enhancing the reach and impact of our programs.
- **Help Craft The Message**: Supports the opportunity for development and networking, ensuring that the voice of the organization is strong and unified.

By working together, we can ensure that our message is clear, our voice is unified, and our impact is felt across all our programs and initiatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLES</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Council</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Leaders</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Rural Development Centers</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators and Faculty</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans and Directors</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Leaders</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSREES</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Associations</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Executive Directors ECO/P/ALU</td>
<td>Program impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategic Imperative 2. Improved Marketing

- Improved Marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROLES</td>
<td>ACTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRED Leadership</td>
<td>Survey institutions to identify existing partnerships that can be enhanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Leaders</td>
<td>LEADERSHIP IN SURVEY COMPLETION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Executive Directors ECOP/APLU</td>
<td>COMMISSION LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators and Faculty</td>
<td>PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY COMPLETION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans and Directors</td>
<td>SUPPORT SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLETION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT USE OF STORIES BY EDUCATORS AND FACULTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Associations</td>
<td>REVIEW AND USE RELEVANT SUCCESS STORIES AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSREES</td>
<td>SUPPORT DISSEMINATION AND USE OF SUCCESS STORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPPORT COMPIATION AND MEANS OF SHARING SUCCESS STORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROVIDE SUGGESTIONS ON PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share success stories across states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LEADERSHIP IN DISSEMINATION AND USE OF STORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LEADERSHIP ROLE IN DEVELOPING MEANS OF SHARING STORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHARE SUCCESS STORIES AND USE RELEVANT STORIES FROM OTHERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT USE OF STORIES BY EDUCATORS AND FACULTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REVIEW AND USE RELEVANT SUCCESS STORIES AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPPORT DISSEMINATION AND USE OF SUCCESS STORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPPORT COMPIATION AND MEANS OF SHARING SUCCESS STORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROVIDE SUGGESTIONS ON PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share success stories across states</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic Imperative 4: Improve Program Development and Delivery

#### Goals

- Identify strategic opportunities.
- Develop strategic plans.
- Establish a clear link between strategic goals and opportunities.
- Improve the communication of strategies and plans.
- Support and encourage the participation of educators, faculty, and staff.
- Increase communication and sharing within and across programs.
- Establish a clear link between institutional, regional, and national needs.
- Support and encourage cross-disciplinary cooperation.

#### Actions

- Develop a process for identifying and sharing emerging opportunities and strategies.
- Establish a framework for communicating both internal and external strategies and plans.
- Support and encourage partnerships and collaborations.
- Increase communication and sharing of ideas and resources.
- Establish a clear link between institutional, regional, and national needs.
- Support and encourage cross-disciplinary cooperation.

#### Roles

- Regional Executive Directors
- CAES
- Professional Associations
- Partners
- Deans and Directors
- Educators and Faculty
- Regional Rural Development Centers
- Program Leaders
- CRED Leadership Council

#### Outputs

- Improved communication and sharing of strategies and plans.
- Enhanced capacity for identifying and sharing emerging opportunities and strategies.
- Increased participation and cooperation across programs and institutions.
- Enhanced communication and sharing of ideas and resources.
- Enhanced alignment between institutional, regional, and national needs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLES</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>PARTNER ACTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRED Leadership Council</td>
<td>Develop key indicators for measuring impacts such as Economic viability and Civic engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Leaders</td>
<td>Host National Dialog on Key Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Rural Development Centers</td>
<td>Support Regional Dialog on Identification of Key Impact Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators and Faculty</td>
<td>Participate in Discussion of Key Indicators and Adopt in Plans of Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans and Directors</td>
<td>Support Development and Adoption of Key Impact Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Associations</td>
<td>Collect Data Compatible with Key Indicators and Institute Support for Implementation of Data Collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Executive Directors</td>
<td>Host National Forum for Discussion of Key Impact Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSREES</td>
<td>Support Adoption of Key Impact Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Fund and Implement Key Indicators for Measuring Impacts such as Economic viability and Civic engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td>Host National Dialog on Key Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Support Regional Initiatives Using Key Impact Indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support additional work in the research and evaluation of CRED programs with the development and sharing of evaluation tools and approaches. Develop key indicators for measuring impacts such as Economic viability and Civic engagement. Host National Dialog on Key Indicators and Support Regional Dialog on Identification of Key Impact Indicators. Participate in Discussion of Key Indicators and Adopt in Plans of Work. Support Development and Adoption of Key Impact Indicators. Collect Data Compatible with Key Indicators and Institute Support for Implementation of Data Collection. Host National Forum for Discussion of Key Impact Indicators and Support Adoption of Key Impact Indicators. Fund and Implement Key Indicators for Measuring Impacts such as Economic viability and Civic engagement. Host National Dialog on Key Indicators and Support Regional Initiatives Using Key Impact Indicators. Host National Dialog on Key Indicators and Support Regional Initiatives Using Key Impact Indicators.