Stronger Economies Together

Strategies for Building New Economic Opportunities

Module Two: Profiling Your Region

Lionel J. Beaulieu, Southern Rural Development Center
Sharon Gulick, University of Missouri
Marion T. Bentley, Utah State University

Module Two: Profiling Your Region

This instructor's guide outlines the content, activities and handouts that should be used to teach this section. Refer to this document for detailed guidance on how to deliver each module.

Using the *Participants' Guide*
The *Participants' Guide* contains handouts designed to assist participants in planning their economic development effort.

Group Exercises
The group exercises in this session will help the participants understand the materials, provide a break from listening to presenter and allow the participants to get to know each other.

Slide 1:   Group introductions; use ice-breaker if desired
Slide 10:   Group Activity (Handout One)
Slide 15:   County Plans: Any Regional Possibilities?
Slide 20:   Your Turn - Dig In! (Handout Two and Demographic Profiles of the
              State, the Region and Its Counties)
Slide 21:   Final Reflections

References

Barta, S., Frye, J., Nelson, J., Paterson, S., Ralstin, S., Wittman, P., & Woods, M. (2010). C.A.R.E. Model. *Southern Rural Development Center.* Retrieved from http://srdc.msstate.edu/care/

Cortright, J. (2006, March). Making sense of clusters: Regional competitiveness and economic development. *The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program.* Retrieved from http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2006/3/cities%20cortright/20060313_clusters.pdf

Robison, M. H. (n. d.). Defining a functional economic region. *EMSI Resource Library.* Retrieved from http://www.economicmodeling.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/10/wp_defining_functional_economic_region.pdf

Web link
U.S. Census
http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html

Have this slide showing as people enter the room. If some time has elapsed since Module One, ask if anyone has questions about SET. If new people have joined the group, ask the group to briefly introduce themselves – name, organization, why they are here, and what they hope that this project will achieve.

Even if this regional group is somewhat established, please deliver this module since it will likely introduce some important new information to the team.

Script:

"Welcome to the SET program. Today, we will give you the opportunity to develop a better idea of what is happening in your region, from both economic and demographic standpoints. It's important to take time at the beginning stages of the SET program to determine the economic development activities being pursued in the region and its counties at this time and to assess the important population features of the region."

Profiling Your Region

Module Two
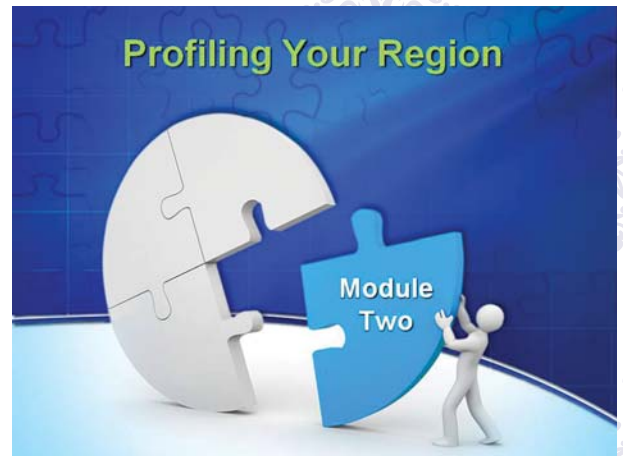
Slide: 1

Time: 5-10 Minutes for introductions
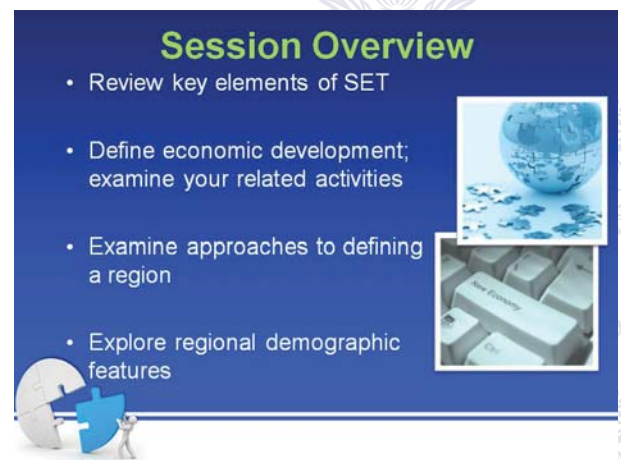
Additional Comments:
Be sure to spend as much time as needed to answer questions. It is important that everyone is on the same page before proceeding. Make sure everyone understands that each session will continue to build on previous sessions. Therefore, everyone's participation at each session is vital. Consider putting the training schedule on a poster in the meeting room.

Use the bulleted items on the slide to provide an overview of Module Two.

Script:

"We'll begin today's session by briefly reviewing some key elements of the SET program. Next, we'll offer a definition of economic development and share a framework to help assess the nature of the economic development activities being pursued by your counties/communities. We will then discuss the variety of options for defining a region and share how this concept is defined in SET. Finally, we will explore the important demographic features of your region and its counties."

Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

The next three slides re-acquaint the team with some core aspects of the SET program. Since this session is likely to take place several weeks after the team submitted its SET application, it's a good idea to spend a few minutes at the beginning of Module Two reviewing some key information from Module One.

A BRIEF SET REVIEW

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Script:

"Before delving into Module Two, let's have a quick review of some information you heard when you were introduced to the SET program. Consider the next three slides a quick refresher on SET, or if you are new to the group, consider this a brief introduction to SET."

Remind the participants of the purpose of SET.

Purpose of SET

Help rural communities/counties to work together as a regional team in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint that builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of their region

"Let me remind you that one of the key reasons the SET program has been launched across the nation is to encourage counties and communities to join hands and begin carving out a sound regional economic development plan that builds on the region's economic strengths. When counties/communities discover and utilize their comparative economic advantages as a region, they are better able to compete in a broader array of markets, multi-state, national and/or international in scope."
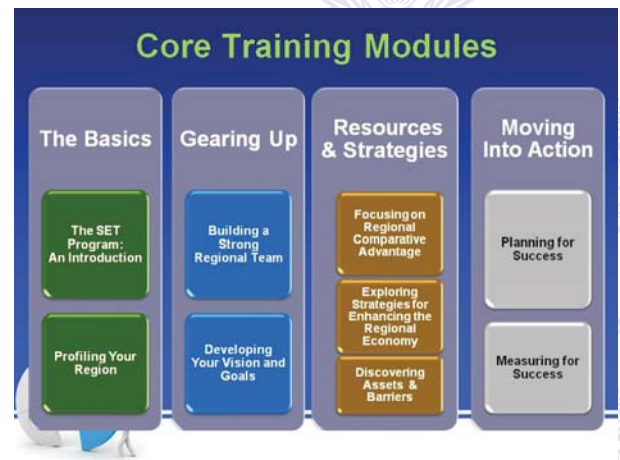
Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

This slide reintroduces the four major phases of the SET program and the modules associated with each. Share the information again in case new team members have joined. Even if others heard Module One, it is a good idea to reacquaint them with the topics that will be covered in the next several weeks.

Slide: 5

Time: 3 Minutes

"I want to briefly remind you that the SET initiative includes nine modules captured under four key headings. Many of you were introduced to the first topic under THE BASICS as we used Module One to recruit regions to apply to SET. Eight additional topics will be covered over the next several weeks. Today's meeting focuses on the second topic under THE BASICS, Profiling Your Region.

The second section, GEARING UP, offers advice on building a strong regional team. Module Three will help you determine if additional people need to be added to your team. Module Four focuses on the elements of producing an inspiring regional vision and sound regional goals.

The third phase will examine RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES. The three modules in this section will showcase the tools and resources your team can employ as it builds and implements its regional goals and plan. It will include a careful assessment of the region's comparative economic advantages, especially the identification of economic clusters that may exist in your region.

The final section will focus on MOVING INTO ACTION. The two modules associated with this last phase of SET offer a detailed roadmap on how to get important projects off the ground and how to gather the type of information needed to ensure these regional efforts stay on track."

Remind the regional team that they are expected to develop and pursue a high-quality regional economic development plan that functions as a roadmap for growing and sustaining the region's economy long-term. This slide details the core elements of a strong regional plan.

Producing a High Quality Plan: The Essential Components

"I am confident that many of you will find value in the SET program training and activities, but the bottom line is that your team is expected to produce a high-quality regional economic development blueprint. Our slide captures the essential elements of such a plan.

Evidence-based: The plan is based on a solid understanding of the region's current and/or emerging assets and challenges. The major strategies incorporated into the plan are designed to build upon the region's comparative economic advantages, especially its key current and/or emerging economic clusters.

Practical: The plan is logical and clear. It has measurable targets it seeks to achieve over the short-, medium- and long term basis. Furthermore, it provides a timeline of when tasks are to be completed, by whom or what SET team subcommittee, and over what period of time (at least for those short-term activities that need to be completed over the first 6-12 months of the plan). Lastly, it has to be a plan that is straightforward and understandable to the public. In other words, avoid being too technical.

Broadly Supported: The plan is the result of a broad range of people and organizations taking a very active role in its development. Diversity of participation is crucial, including involvement by people and groups from all the region's counties, across a broad array of sectors (such as business, education, government, economic development, non-profits), and across major demographic groups.

In addition, it is important to show that input on the plan has been gathered from the general public and other organizations and institutions. The mechanisms to do so include SET-sponsored meetings for the general public or for a specific organization (such as civic, service, business groups), focus/roundtable group meetings, and on-line idea collection. The feedback captured as a result of these activities are then used to refine the regional plan.

Slide: 6

Time: 7 Minutes

Handout: You may use Module One-Handout Three: Producing a High Quality Regional Economic Development Plan

Remember to show that the plan has buy-in from several key decision makers in the region. Such support is demonstrated by active participation in the planning process by key decision makers (and/or their representatives) and/or by key decision makers' explicitly expressed commitment to support the plan's implementation.

Focused on Regional Economic Development: The central focus of the plan must be on strategies that directly or indirectly advance regional economic development. That is, the economic development blueprint must be designed to benefit the whole region rather than a single community, county or sub-area of the region. Furthermore, the plan should embrace economic development activities that link to, and help strengthen, the region's economic cluster(s).

Aligned with the Vision and Goals: The plan must be in synch with the regional team's vision statement and the specific goals they have developed."

Producing a High Quality Plan:
The Essential Components

Slide: 6

Time: 7 Minutes

Handout: You may use Module One-Handout Three: Producing a High Quality Regional Economic Development Plan

Instructions:

SET trains teams to create a sound economic development plan for the region. It is critical for the SET team to develop a shared understanding of what economic development is all about. Provide a definition as a way of generating ideas and reactions from team members.

Script:

"As we move into the content of SET, it is important to have a shared understanding of what economic development is all about. I'd like to provide you with a definition for your consideration and then invite you to offer your thoughts on what adjustments may be needed in the definition." [Go to the next slide.]

The definitions highlighted in this slide are drawn from a Southern Rural Development Center publication by a team of Extension educators at Oklahoma State University. Review these terms with the participants.
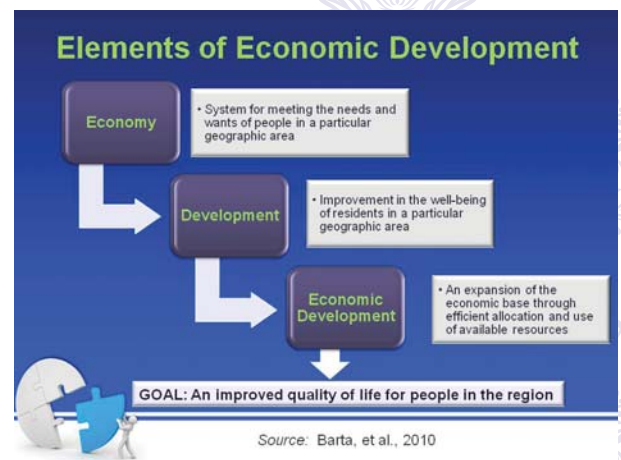
Elements of Economic Development

Economy • System for meeting the needs and wants of people in a particular geographic area

Development • Improvement in the well-being of residents in a particular geographic area

Economic Development • An expansion of the economic base through efficient allocation and use of available resources

GOAL: An improved quality of life for people in the region

Source: Barta, et al., 2010

Slide: 8

Time: 5 Minutes

Source: Barta, S., Frye, J., Nelson, J., Paterson, S., Ralstin, S., Wittman, P., & Woods, M. (2010). C.A.R.E. Model. *Southern Rural Development Center.* Retrieved from http://srdc.msstate.edu/care/

"I'd like to review three terms relevant to our discussion today. It's a good idea to make sure we are on the same page with our understanding of economic development. Drawing from a publication produced by a team of Extension economists at Oklahoma State University, I'd like to share with you three important terms:

- **Economy:** It is a system for meeting the needs and wants of people in a particular geographic area, such as a community, region, state, nation, or world.
- **Development:** It represents improvements in the well being of residents in a particular geographic area. This includes such measures as expanding the economic base, improving services, or providing equality of opportunities.
- **Economic Development:** It refers to an expansion of the economic base through efficient allocation and use of available resources. A working definition for economic development could be any activity which provides additional jobs and income.

However, in its broadest sense, economic development focuses on the maintenance or improvement of the quality of life of people in a specific geographic area. In other words, it is more than creating jobs and increasing income. It's about pursuing economic activities that are consistent with the region's vision and goals and embracing strategies that seek to benefit all residents of the region, not only a chosen few.

Let's get your reactions to the definition of economic development. Is there anything missing?"

In nearly all cases, the economic development activities being pursued by most communities or regions can be captured by the C.A.R.E. model. Introduce the four elements associated with C.A.R.E.

The C.A.R.E. Model

Slide: 9

Time: 2 Minutes

"There are several economic development strategies that your communities/ counties may be currently pursuing. With few exceptions, these activities can be classified into one of the four quadrants associated with C.A.R.E.: Creation, Attraction, Retention and Expansion.

- **Creation** involves encouraging the formation of new firms from within the region.
- **Attraction** includes efforts to recruit business and industry to the region.
- **Retention** strategies maintain or strengthen the region's existing firms.
- **Expansion** encourages the growth of existing firms in the region."
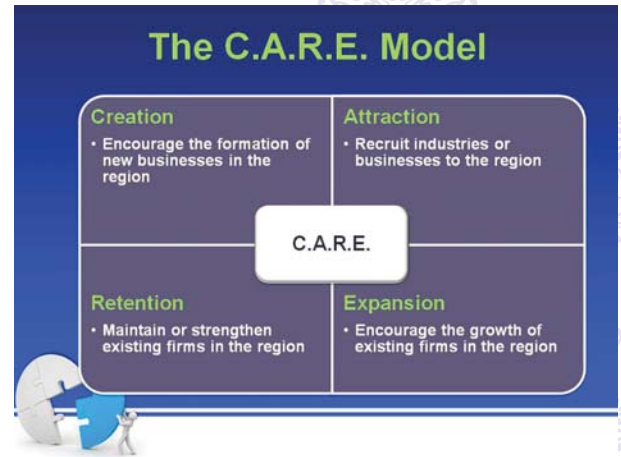
It's important for the team to get an idea of the economic development activities being pursued by counties/communities involved in the SET regional effort. Are the efforts similar, conflicting, or complementary? Do they reflect the multi-pronged approach represented by the C.A.R.E. model? That's what we want the SET team to take time to study.

Two options are for your consideration. Option 1 is the recommended approach, but use Option 2 if you believe it is a better fit with your regional team. Whichever approach you use, please inform the team members well ahead of time (at least 3-4 weeks) of your plans to examine economic development strategies of the counties (and key cities/towns) in the SET region. For Option 1, assign representatives from each county to prepare a presentation that highlights their county's economic development plans. For Option 2, ask regional team members to help you collect the county/city plans so they are available for the team to study and analyze during this meeting.

Option 1:

Because the team has representatives from each of the counties/cities/towns that make up the SET region, invite team members from each county/community to prepare 15-20 minute presentations showcasing their areas' economic development plans. For example, if the region is made up of five counties, team members should hear five presentations. Each group should also try to include the main economic development efforts of the county's key cities or towns, assuming written plans exist.

The SET county representatives are free to invite others from their county to help present an overview of the economic development plan (such as local government officials or chambers of commerce representatives). Remind them that they should focus on the major economic development activities and offer a brief summary of these key strategies. Urge them not to delve into the details of the county plans.

Once a team has presented highlights of their county's economic development plan, allow up to 10 minutes for questions from the entire regional group. In addition, ask the group to help classify the economic development activities into the C.A.R.E. model categories. [Note: Have flip chart paper on the wall with each of the four headings and record the county's activities under the appropriate heading, putting the name of the county/city/town by each item. Repeat after each county presentation.

Group Activity

- Review economic development plans of counties/cities in your region
- Categorize activities using the C.A.R.E. model
- Identify common activities, major differences
- Examine the balance between activities in each component of the C.A.R.E. model

Slide: 10

Time: 60 Minutes

Handout One: Current C.A.R.E. Activities

When all reports are completed, ask the group to discuss the following:

- What common strategies exist across these counties (communities)?
- What are some key differences? Why do you think these differences exist?
- Which of the four components of the C.A.R.E. model is most common in these plans? Which components are less often included in these plans?
- Are the strategies balanced/unbalanced (is there sufficient attention being given to all four C.A.R.E. components)? What strategies are missing?

Option 2:

1. Secure copies of the economic development plans from each county/community, if feasible, that make up the SET region.
2. Divide the group into small teams of 4-5 individuals. Give each team a copy of a economic development plan from one of the counties involved in the SET program. For example, if five counties form a SET region, you should have five economic development plans (assuming each county has a formal economic development plan). Each group should review a different economic development plan. If you have several plans, each group may have to evaluate a couple of plans. Please don't skip this activity since it is intended to acquaint the team with the variety of economic development activities underway across the region.
3. Ask each small group to review and evaluate its assigned plan. Groups should use Handout One: Current C.A.R.E. Activities to classify the main economic development activities into the appropriate C.A.R.E. category.
4. When each group has analyzed the plans, ask group spokespeople to share with the entire team the Creation strategies included in their county plans. Do the same with the Attraction, Retention and Expansion activities. If possible, have someone record the answers under the four appropriate headings on a flip chart.
5. When all reports are completed, ask the group to discuss the following:
   - What common strategies exist across these counties (communities)?
   - What are some key differences? Why do you think these differences exist?
   - Which of the four components of the C.A.R.E. model is most common in these plans? Which components are less often included in these plans?
   - Are the strategies balanced/unbalanced (is there sufficient attention being given to all four C.A.R.E. components)? What strategies are missing?

Group Activity

- Review economic development plans of counties/cities in your region
- Categorize activities using the C.A.R.E. model
- Identify common activities, major differences
- Examine the balance between activities in each component of the C.A.R.E. model

NOTE: If you have more plans to review than time will allow, assign each small group just one plan to review today and distribute the other plans to review as a homework assignment prior to the next SET meeting. Take time at the beginning of the next session to review the assignment and build on what was learned in this session.

Group Activity

- Review economic development plans of counties/cities in your region
- Categorize activities using the C.A.R.E. model
- Identify common activities, major differences
- Examine the balance between activities in each component of the C.A.R.E. model

Script:

Slide: 10 continued

Time: 60 Minutes

Handout One: Current C.A.R.E. Activities

Option 1:

"It is important that we take time now to examine the mix of economic development activities that counties (and/or communities) in your SET region are currently pursuing. We are going to spend a good portion of this meeting reviewing the economic development plans of the counties (and key cities/towns) that make up your SET region.

Members of our SET team who live in these counties, along with special guests you may have invited, will present the overviews. Each county will have 15-20 minutes to showcase their economic development plans, and then we'll open up for questions from other regional team members."

[After each presentation, classify the C.A.R.E. activities. At the end, lead the group discussion using the questions in Option 1.]

Option 2:

"It is important that we take time now to examine the mix of economic development activities that counties (and/or communities) in your SET region are currently pursuing. I have copies of the current economic development plans from all (or some) of the counties/communities that make-up your SET region. We will take the next 30-45 minutes to break up into small groups and study each of these plans. If we want to ultimately develop a high-quality plan for the region, we have to start by recognizing, honoring and studying the plans that counties have developed already. Let's examine current activities and see how they align with the four components of the C.A.R.E. model."

[Divide the team into small groups and follow the steps in the instructions for Option 2.]

This section discusses regional development. After examining the current, county-level economic development activities, it's time to focus on a subject they be less familiar with, unless the team has been working for some time on regional development strategies.

Script:

"Now that we have explored the current economic development strategies of the individual counties/communities that make up your SET region, we will shift gears and discuss regional economic development, a topic that may be less familiar to local governments, community leaders, and residents."

Slide: 11

Time: 1 Minute

Share with the group some of the attributes associated with a region.

"What do we mean when we use the word region? We could be defining an area that is similar on some dimension, such as physical geography, ecology, or economic or social characteristics. It may be a feature that distinguishes itself from other areas, such as a region dominated by agriculture or boasting a strong concentration of health-related enterprises. While each region has a certain amount of commonality internally, when you compare one region to the other one, they can be quite different."

What is a Region?

- Geographical area of similar characteristics:
  - Similar within
  - Different from other places

- Area with unique identity and meaning

Slide: 12

Time: 2 Minutes

Region is a concept that can be defined in a variety of ways. This slide presents six applications. After you have briefly presented these variations on the concept of a region, ask the participants to indicate which of these they tend to use most frequently.

Script:

"Region is not a concept that is used in a singular way. Depending on the perspective you use, it can be defined in at least six different ways, as outlined on this slide. There may also be other ways you can define region.

- **Ecological:** Researchers note that the continent of North America is divided into 15 broad, level one ecological regions. It includes such areas as the Tundra, Hudson Plains, Northern Forests, Northwestern Forested Mountains, Marine West Coast Forests, Eastern Temperate Forests, Great Plains, North American Deserts, Mediterranean California, Southern Semi-Arid Highlands, Temperate Sierras, Tropical Dry Forests and Tropical Wet Forests. (For more information, see the US Environmental Protection Agency website: http://www.epa.gov/wed/pages/ecoregions/na_eco.htm#Level%20I)
- **Political:** Our states are divided in a number of U.S. Congressional districts, or regions. Districts/regions are also associated with the selection of your state legislators.
- **Administrative:** Schools districts, water management regions, regional libraries, judicial regions, and regional planning districts are all examples of administrative regions. The Economic Development Districts established by the U.S. Economic Development Administration are another example.
- **Geographic:** There are different areas of the country that are considered regions as a result of a specific geography they share, such as the Mid South Delta region, Appalachian region, Great Plains region, and Western region.
- **Policy or Data Relevant:** The Economic Research Service has developed a series of regions based on key data of interest to the policy community, such as persistent poverty, low education, and retirement destination areas.
- **Economic:** According to the Brookings Institution, regions form industry clusters – 'a group of firms, and related economic actors and institutions, that are located near one another and that draw productive advantage from their mutual proximity and connections.' Another related economic concept is 'functional economic regions', areas that EMSI states are bound together by trade links, that is, the buying and selling of raw materials, industrial and consumer goods and services, and labor.

Keep in mind that there may be some overlap in these six regional types."

Slide: 13

Time: 5 Minutes

Sources:
Cortright, J. (2006, March). Making sense of clusters: Regional competitiveness and economic development. *The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program.* Retrieved from http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2006/3/cities%20cortright/20060313_clusters.pdf

Robison, M. H. (n. d.). Defining a functional economic region. *EMSI Resource Library.* Retrieved from http://www.economicmodeling.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/10/wp_defining_functional_economic_region.pdf

Instructions:

Make clear at this point that the SET program has one goal in mind – to identify and build on the economic clusters that exist and/or are emerging in a given region. While SET invited applications from a group of counties that were willing to work together on building a regional economic plan, that plan should be linked to the region's economic clusters. There is a good chance that these clusters may not overlap perfectly with the group of counties that are part of the SET team. The SET regional team should be open in the future to inviting new counties to join their team if the regional cluster(s) they are interested in addressing extends beyond the geographic boundaries of the current counties.

SET Focuses on Economic Regions

- SET begins with a group of geographically linked counties that want to work and think regionally.

- SET's main focus is connecting counties that are economically linked through economic clusters.

Slide: 14

Time: 3 Minutes

Script:

"Your SET team is made up of representatives from the group of counties (or communities) that agreed to think and work together across geographic boundaries. This is a great way to get involved in SET, but SET's ultimate goal is to identify the economic clusters that exist (or may be emerging) in your region. This means that the definition that SET embraces is the one that sees regions as an economic entity.

In Module Six, you will have the opportunity to determine the economic clusters that exist in your region. These are economic areas which hold a competitive advantage relative to other portions of the U.S. It is quite possible that these clusters will encompass counties that are not represented on your SET team. If that's the case, it's important to be open to the idea of inviting new counties to join your team, especially those counties that are part of the cluster(s) that you intend to focus on as part of your regional economic development plan."

Now that the group knows that SET is focused on the economic comparative advantages of a region, ask the team to discuss whether the various county economic development plans they examined identified any economic activities that could operate successfully at the regional (multi-county) level.

County Plans: Any Regional Possibilities?

- Any focused on regional economic development activities? Which ones?

- Can the region compete at the multi-state, national, and/or international levels?

Script:

Slide: 15

Time: 10 Minutes

"Think back to the county economic development plans you reviewed. Since SET is most interested in discovering regional economic strengths, were there any economic development strategies included in these plans that could function successfully at a regional level? If so, which ones and why? [Encourage the group to identify as many as possible.]

Of the ones you have identified, which ones are the most likely to compete relative to other regions or areas of the U.S.?

Let's keep this information so that it can be reintroduced in Module Six."

The final section of Module Two focuses on important demographic features of the region.

EXPLORING THE DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF YOUR REGION

"This final section of Module Two offers you the opportunity to examine the demographic features of your region. There are at least three reasons why it makes sense at this point:

1. It is a good way to introduce you to data that you may not have seen before on your region.
2. It gives you a chance to see how counties that are part of your SET region might share similar traits or differ from one another.
3. It alerts you to the demographic groups that might not be involved on your SET team, but whose views and perspectives need to be heard in your SET meetings. We will explore this further in Module Three."
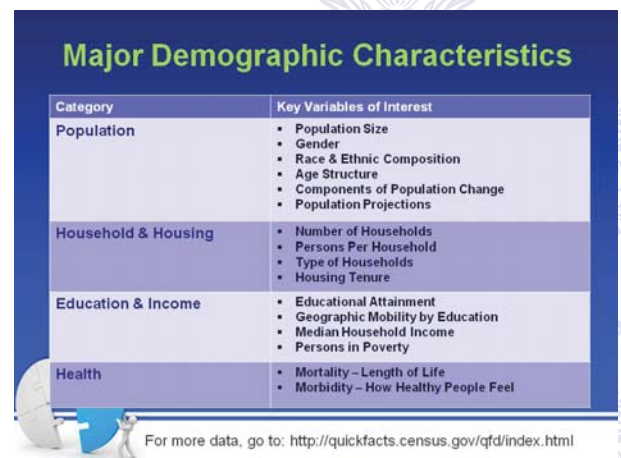
Slide: 16

Time: 2 Minutes

The amount of information available for the SET region and for the counties that make up the SET team can be overwhelming. We want to offer the team the opportunity to carefully study key population-related data on their region and counties.

Slide: 17

Time: 2 Minutes

Resource: For more data, visit the U.S.Census website at: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html

"You can find a wide variety of statistical information on the counties in your SET region. If you're not careful, you can become quickly overwhelmed by the volume of data that exist. The key is to focus on the items that can paint a good picture of the core population features of your SET region and its counties.

To start the process, we have generated a series of reports that showcase the variables listed on this slide. These items are classified into four major categories: population, household and housing, education and income, and health. You should find a regional report that summarizes data for all the counties in your SET region and individual profiles on each county.

If you want to examine demographic data items beyond those that we have prepared for you, visit the U.S. Census website listed at the bottom of this slide. Key economic-related data will be discussed in Module Five, so we recommend that you avoid exploring these types of data items at this point."

The team will be given the opportunity to study the data that have been generated on their region and the counties that make up that region. First, however, we want to give them some pointers on what they should look for as they delve into the information. Highlight the team's three options for examining the data provided.

Slide: 18

Time: 2 Minutes

"We want to give you time to study the information that we have generated on your SET region and its counties, but, first, I want to offer you a few pointers that I hope will allow you to better understand the data. When you begin analyzing the data, we encourage you to examine it in three different ways:

1. Cross-sectional: Look at the data for a specific year, such as 2000 or 2010. What are the statistics showing in terms of the size and composition of the population?
2. Comparative: Compare data for a given year across counties. What counties share similarities? Which ones are different from each other?
3. Longitudinal: How are the characteristics of the population changing over time, for example, between 2000 and 2010? Is the racial and ethnic composition changing? What's happening to the age structure?"

This slide highlights additional ideas on how to examine the data the SET team has been provided.

What to Look for
- Conditions the data describe
- Direction of change
- Intensity of change
- Comparison of counties in the region
- Overall picture the data paint

Script:

Slide: 19

Time: 2 Minutes

"Here are some additional items to make note of as you study these data and other data that you will examine as part of SET:

- Take note of the **conditions** that are described by the data, such as the level of poverty, percent of adults with low levels of education, and percent of the population composed of senior citizens (65 and older).
- What is the **direction of the change** in some of the variables? Is the situation getting better/worse or going higher or lower?
- Is the **nature or intensity of the change** sizable or minimal? For example, many counties may have experienced an influx of Hispanics, but the growth may have been quite large in one county versus another county.
- When doing a **comparison**, which counties are doing better than the region as a whole? Which ones are doing worse? Why?
- Finally, step back and take a look at your findings. What's the **overall picture** the data paint for the SET region and/or its counties?"

Distribute the data profiles that have been prepared on the SET state, region, and counties, which are found on the SET website. Ask them to study the information using the guiding questions offered in the previous slides. Give the group 30 minutes or so to complete this important activity and then an additional 15 minutes for small groups to report to the larger group.

To prevent the possibility of information overload, consider using the following strategy (or some variation of this approach):

1. Divide the SET team into groups of 3-5 people. Give each group a copy of the regional data, but only one county profile. If there are more county profiles than there are small groups, divide the remainders among the groups.

2. Ask each group to examine the data and to list on a poster paper some of their key observations/findings. Groups will use Handout Two: Data Analysis Guidelines to help them. Groups should post their observations on flip chart paper.

3. Call on a representative from each group to report the highlights of their findings.

4. After each group has reported, ask the team: "What did you find most surprising? What data were of greatest concern to you? What data did you find most encouraging? Other overall observations you want to offer?"

5. Then, ask: "Knowing what we know now about the profile of the region and its counties, are there people you feel need to be invited to be part of the SET team? Are there specific demographic groups that need to be involved in SET?"

Your Turn – Dig In!

Instructions:

Ask the group these important questions as you wrap up Module Two.

Script:

"I'd like to take the last few minutes of our meeting to ask some important questions about Module Two. What do you see as the takeaways from our session together? What did you find most valuable? What did you feel were less important to your regional team?

What homework needs to be completed prior to our next SET session?

Given what we have discussed in Module Two, are there other people that you need to invite to be part of your SET team? If so, who are they, and who is going to invite them to come to our next session?

Any final thoughts or issues you want to offer at this point?"

Final Reflections

- Key takeaways from this module?
- Most helpful information? Least helpful?
- Homework to be completed prior to the next SET meeting?
- Additional participants needed for next SET session? Who will contact?
- Other items?

Slide: 21

Time: 5 Minutes

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- Extension and research faculty from a variety of land-grant universities in the U.S.
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Remember to show that the plan has buy-in from several key decision makers in the region. Such support is demonstrated by active participation in the planning process by key decision makers (and/or their representatives) and/or by key decision makers' explicitly expressed commitment to support the plan's implementation.

Focused on Regional Economic Development: The central focus of the plan must be on strategies that directly or indirectly advance regional economic development. That is, the economic development blueprint must be designed to benefit the whole region rather than a single community, county or sub-area of the region. Furthermore, the plan should embrace economic development activities that link to, and help strengthen, the region's economic cluster(s).

Aligned with the Vision and Goals: The plan must be in synch with the regional team's vision statement and the specific goals they have developed."

SET trains teams to create a sound economic development plan for the region. It is critical for the SET team to develop a shared understanding of what economic development is all about. Provide a definition as a way of generating ideas and reactions from team members.

"As we move into the content of SET, it is important to have a shared understanding of what economic development is all about. I'd like to provide you with a definition for your consideration and then invite you to offer your thoughts on what adjustments may be needed in the definition." [Go to the next slide.]