

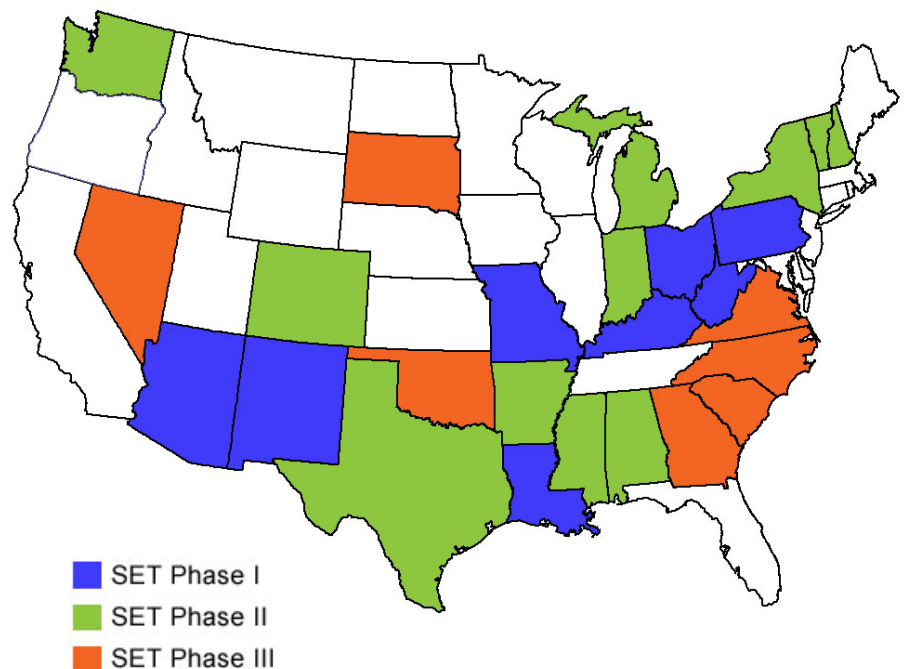


Stronger Economies Together

WHAT IS SET?

Stronger Economies Together (SET) enables communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of that region.

Creating, attracting and retaining jobs as a single rural county, in isolation from other nearby counties, is becoming increasingly ineffective. In today's global marketplace, economic development progress is more likely to be realized when rural and metro counties work together as a region to assess their resources and then design and implement plans that build on their assets and comparative economic strengths.



Launched in 2010 by USDA Rural Development and the nation's four Regional Rural Development Centers and their land-grant university partners, this exciting initiative is now in place in nearly 40 regions in 19 states (Phases I and II). Regional teams in seven additional states are joining Phase III in 2012.

SET BENEFITS

- More than 35 hours of valuable, step-by-step training to guide production of a practical and viable regional economic development plan
- In-depth data tailored to the region, describing its current and emerging clusters, comparative economic advantages, and detailed demographic and socio-economic information
- Tools to uncover local assets and resources that can advance the region's economic strategies
- Up to 40 hours of technical assistance from Extension educators, USDA RD state staff and the Regional Rural Development Centers to guide the implementation of regional goals and strategies
- Opportunity to apply for a special assistance grant to support more advanced regional data analyses or to connect with those with specialized expertise needed to reach your regional goals
- Chance to share information and gather ideas from other SET regions nationwide

TRAINING PROGRAM OUTLINE

A Snapshot of SET *(Time: 1 hour)*

- What is SET?
- What it offers to a regional team
- Who's who? State partners and trainers
- Preview of the training program

Regional Economic Development 101 *(Time: 3 hours)*

- Defining economic development
- Exploring major trends
- Examining your economic development activities
- Defining a region: Different approaches
- Determining key features of successful regions

Building a Stronger Regional Team *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Determining elements of a sound team
- Developing a call to action
- Inviting broad participation
- Creating a succession plan
- Exploring habits of highly effective regional teams

Developing Your Vision and Goals *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Defining your vision
- Determining the features of a vision statement
- Developing a vision statement
- Determining the elements of a good regional goals

Examining Current Demographic Features of Your Region *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Local and regional demographic data: Past, present and future features of the region's population
- Features of the regional labor force
- What features/trends mean for your regional economic development goals

Exploring Opportunities for a Stronger Regional Economy *(Time: 6 hours)*

- Investigating the economic base of the region
- Understanding regional comparative advantages
- Examining tools to identify your regional economic development advantages
- Exploring value-added strategies

Exploring Regional Assets & Barriers *(Time: 5 hours)*

- Examining asset-based regional development
- Discovering assets that exist locally
- Pinpointing potential barriers

Planning for Success *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Defining the regional goals
- Identifying the ABCs of success
- Selecting strategies
- Planning for action

Measuring for Success *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Exploring the value of measuring
- Deciding what to measure
- Using measures to promote success
- Tracking appropriate measures
- Creating a regional plan for measuring success

Supplementary Modules

- Community Business Matching Model
- Entrepreneurship
- Financial Capital
- Networking
- Sustainable Communities

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

