



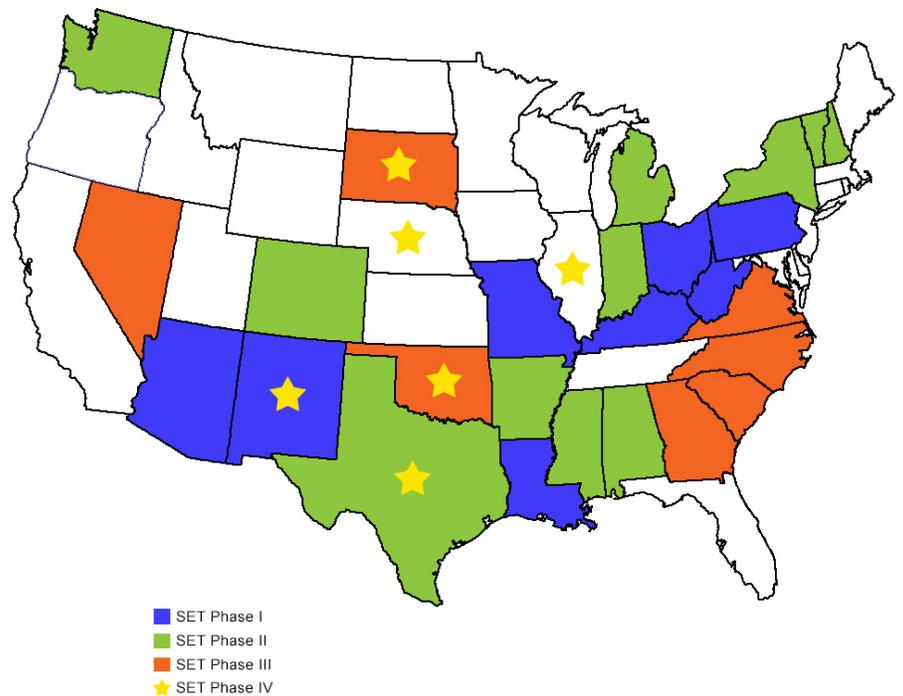
Stronger Economies Together

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 more than 50 regions in 28 states.



SET BENEFITS

- More than 25 hours of valuable, step-by-step coaching 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

PLANNING PROCESS

Launching SET and Building a Strong Regional Team (Time: 2.5 hours)

- Define the region
- Examine benefits and barriers to building this regional partnership
- *Deliverable:* Generate a list of essential partners
- *Deliverable:* Develop a call to action
- *HQP:* Draft a plan for involving stakeholders

Exploring the Region's Economic and Demographic Foundations (Time: 2 hours)

- Examine economic development foundations in place in the region
- Explore regional demographic and workforce features
- *Deliverable:* Analysis of the region's demographic strengths and concerns
- *HQP:* Draft a summary of the region's demographic climate that impacts the regional plan

Focusing on Regional Competitive Advantage (Time: 2 hours)

- Investigate the region's economic advantage
- Explore regional data to identify regional industrial clusters
- *Deliverable:* Select industry clusters for further exploration
- *HQP:* Draft a rationale for industries selected

Exploring Strategies for Enhancing the Regional Economy (Time: 2.5 hours)

- Identify economic leaks in the region
- Explore avenues for strengthening clusters
- *Deliverable:* Select potential directions for the region to explore
- *HQP:* Complete the evidence section describing which industry cluster(s) selected

Developing Your Vision and Goals (Time: 2.5 hours)

- Design a strong regional vision statement
- Write SMART goals
- *Deliverable:* Draft a regional vision statement
- *Deliverable:* Draft initial SMART goals
- *HQP:* Draft vision and goals for plan

Discovering Regional Assets & Barriers (Time: 2.5 hours)

- Introduce asset-based community development (ABCD)
- Explore the link between the ABCD process and the seven community capitals framework
- *Deliverable:* Conduct an initial assessment of regional assets and barriers
- *HQP:* Draft assets and barriers assessment for plan

Planning for Success (Time: 3 hours)

- Identify the ABCs of success
- Select strategies
- Plan for action
- *Deliverable:* Identify strategies to support regional goals
- *HQP:* Draft strategies, timelines, responsibilities, and a Plan of Action

Measuring for Success (Time: 3 hours)

- Use measures to promote success
- Track appropriate measures
- *Deliverable & HQP:* Create a regional plan for measuring success

Supplementary Modules

- Community Business Matching Model
- Entrepreneurship
- Land Use Planning
- Networking

CONTACTS

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