

# Extension CRED Impact Indicators – Review, Refresh, Revise

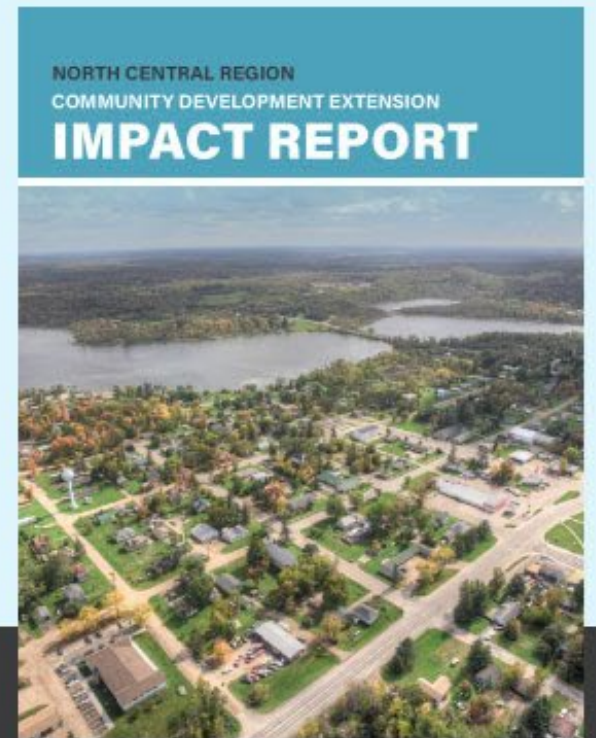
**WEBINAR**

**MAY 2, 2024 • 3:00 PM Eastern / 2:00 PM Central / 1:00 PM Mountain / 12:00 PM Pacific**

The North Central Region is leading an effort to review, refresh and potentially revise the set of impact indicators that report on Extension CRED work. Other regions are using some or all of these indicators, along with other indicators. In this webinar, we will describe the plan for reviewing the indicators, along with the results of a national survey to assess how indicators are currently used.

*Presenters:*

- **Scott Chazdon**, Consultant and Retired Evaluation Specialist, University of Minnesota Extension
- **Anne H. Silvis**, Assistant Dean, Community and Economic Development, University of Illinois Extension
- **Michael Wilcox**, Assistant Director and Program Leader for Community Development, Purdue Extension and Associate Director, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD)



# Leadership Chautauqua: Revolutionizing Extension's Approach to Community Leadership Development Systems

The notion of a Chautauqua, an Iroquois word for a lake near the first Chautauqua site in 1874, brought together diverse perspectives for dialog and debate. The *Leadership Chautauqua* established new relationships and utilized inventive facilitation strategies to make visible the underlying community systems that encourage sustainable approaches to community leadership development.

Webinar participants will gain insights into this *Leadership Chautauqua* approach, with particular attention paid to the emergent themes that can revolutionize Extension's approaches to community leadership development systems.



**WEBINAR • MAY 15, 2024 • 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)**



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**Community  
Development  
Society**

# Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) Indicators

- ✓ Foundation laid in 2009 Program Leaders report
- ✓ North Central region began collecting/reporting in 2010
- ✓ Southern region has reported since 2014
- ✓ CRED programming and staffing in Northeast and West regions more sparse; reporting impacts more challenging



Report prepared with support from USDA – CSREES and the Southern Rural Development Center

# What's driving us?

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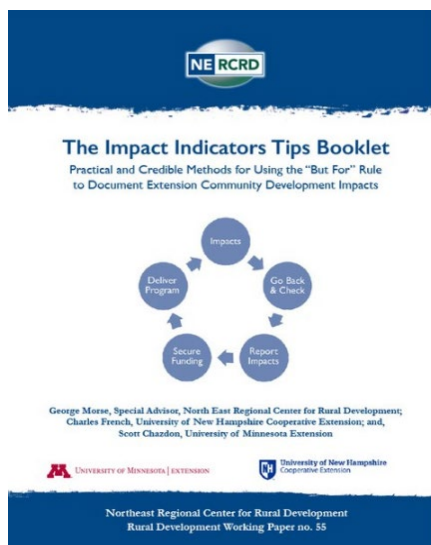
The need to tell compelling stories at state, local, and national levels about the collective impact of our community and economic development work.

## Improve our ability to:

- Gather and assess collective impacts and leverage each other's strengths
- Develop support for CRED programming
- Make strategic decisions regarding the importance, value, and potential of CRED programs

# Benefits of collecting indicator data

- Need to convince state and federal funders that Extension programs are a good investment
- Data collection can also be used for scholarship and program improvement



“Is Extension making a difference?”  
“If so, how much?”

## What are the benefits to me and my programs if I report these?

There are **seven** benefits to you as an educator for collecting and reporting these indicators.

- 1** Your program is likely to receive greater funding, making it possible to reach more people or more communities. Both public and private funders like to back programs that have a proven track record of making a difference, so investing time in these can help you expand resources to reach more people. As we learned from a recent survey, 56 percent of CD educators in Iowa and Missouri named this a benefit of indicators.<sup>1</sup> The following graphic illustrates these connections.
- 2** You are more likely to get raises if your programs are seen as successful. The indicators can help you demonstrate this. Seventy-five percent of the CD educators in Iowa and Missouri reported the indicators were valuable in their personal promotion materials.
- 3** If you make small adjustments in your program to facilitate impact indicator collection later, it engages the community more fully, builds more stakeholder support and leads to greater impacts. Almost four in five (79 percent) of the educators reported that the indicators helped them build stakeholder support.
- 4** Your Extension programming will improve, via feedback on what works and what doesn't. Eighty-six percent of the CD educators surveyed used the indicators to help them improve their programs.
- 5** The indicators help to justify participation fees as well as time costs of the Extension program. More than half of the educators reported that they used the indicators to justify program fees.
- 6** The indicator results are helpful when applying for grants. Likewise, more than half of the educators used indicator results in their grant applications.
- 7** As you participate with others from other states striving to report indicators, this will enrich everyone's ability to show that Extension makes a difference. This benefit happens as educators trade ideas via journal articles, webinars, and conferences on their successes and challenges in using indicators. There is a National CRED Indicators Work Group that meets monthly to exchange ideas and develop educational materials. Check out their webinars at: [goo.gl/1wW20H](http://goo.gl/1wW20H)



We (Extension educators) deliver programs, which have impacts – but with delays. We go back and check (in person, by phone or by survey) and then report the impacts. To secure more of these impacts, public and private funders provide funding to pay staff, who deliver more programs and around we go!

<sup>1</sup> George Masse conducted an online survey of 41 Extension field educators in Iowa and Missouri who specialized in community development and had worked with CD impact indicators in August 2015. The response rate was 68 percent.



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# Current North Central region indicators

- Number of community or organizational plans/policies developed
- Number of community or organizational, plans/policies adopted and/or implemented
- Dollar value of grants & resources generated by communities
- Number of participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken
- Dollar value of volunteer hours leveraged to deliver programs
- Number of volunteer hours for community generated work
- Dollar value of organization and/or community-generated volunteer hours
- Number of business plans developed
- Number of businesses created
- Number of jobs created
- Number of jobs retained
- Dollar value of efficiencies and savings



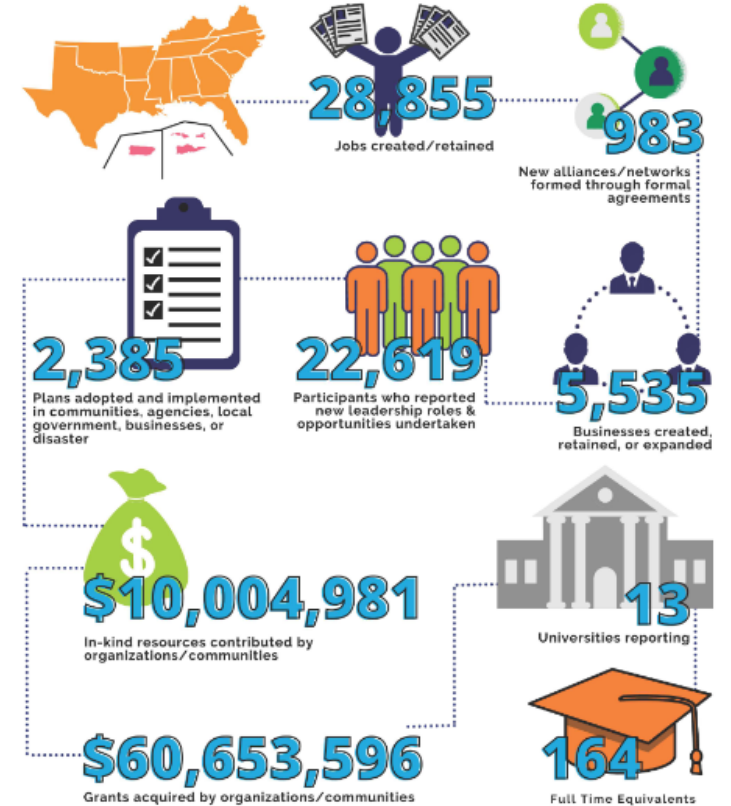
# Current Southern region Indicators

- Dollar value of grants generated by organizations or communities
- Dollar value of other in-kind resources contributed by organization or community
- Number of plans (new or revised) adopted and that have begun to be implemented in community, agency, local government, business or disaster
- Number of participants who report new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken
- Number of businesses created, retained, or expanded
- Number of jobs created/retained
- Number of new alliances or networks formed through some type of formal agreement or MOU

## Southern Region Impacts

2022

Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts



# Impact indicators should be SMART . . .

Objectives should be **S.M.A.R.T. + C.:**

- *Specific.* That is, they tell *how much* (e.g., 10%) of *what* is to be achieved (e.g., what behavior of whom or what outcome) *by when* (e.g., by 2025)?
- *Measurable.* Information concerning the objective can be collected, detected, or obtained.
- *Achievable.* It is feasible to pull them off.
- *Relevant* to the mission. Your organization has a clear understanding of how these objectives fit in with the overall vision and mission of the group.
- *Timed.* Your organization has developed a timeline (a portion of which is made clear in the objectives) by which they will be achieved.
- *Challenging.* They stretch the group to set its aims on significant improvements that are important to members of the community.

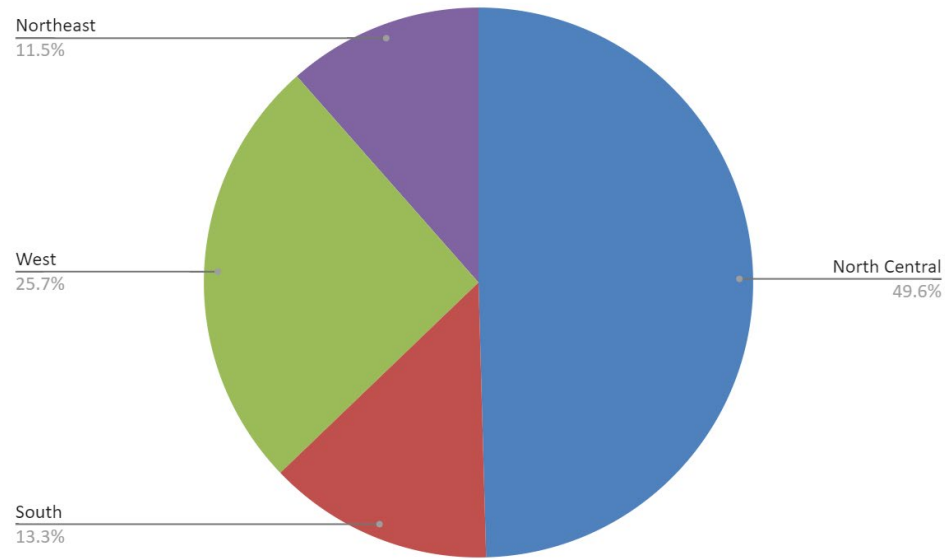
Source: University of Kansas Community Toolbox . . . <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/strategic-planning/create-objectives/main>



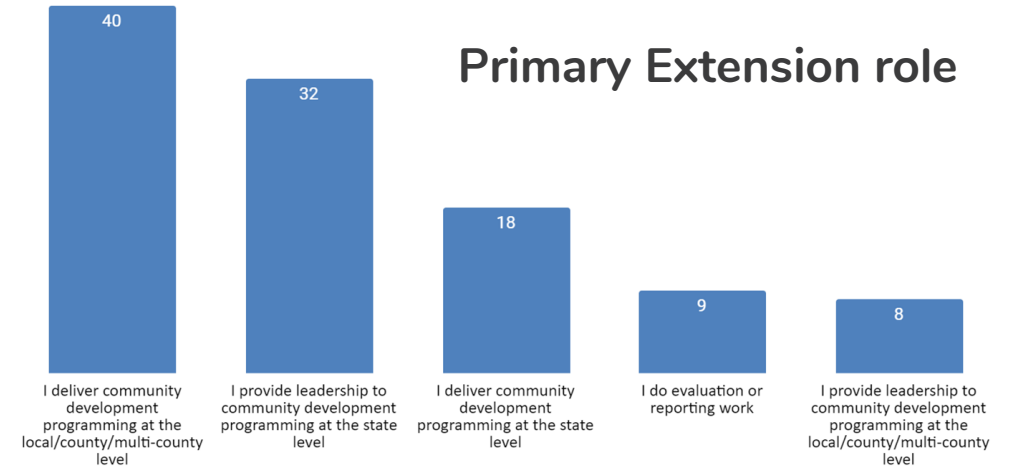
# Survey response

113 at least partial responses from 34 states

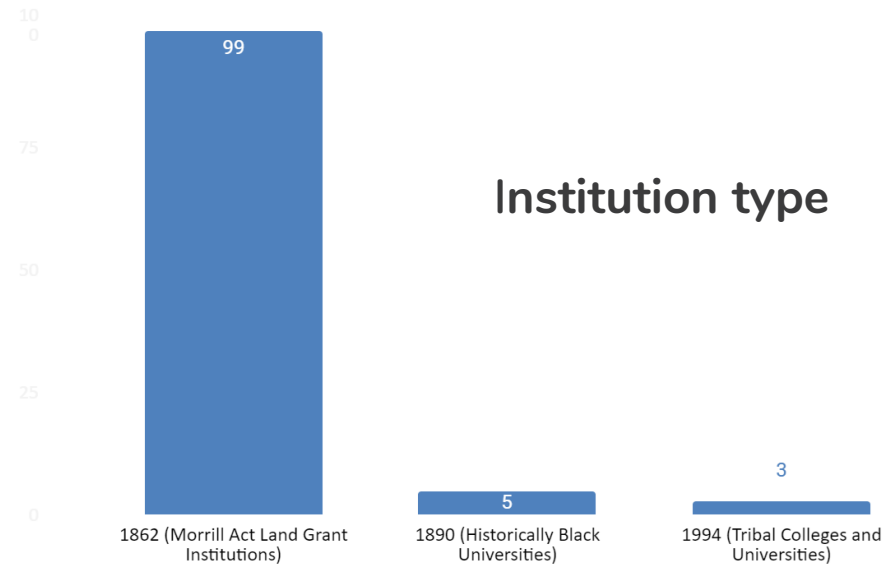
## Regional breakdown



## Primary Extension role



## Institution type



# Survey design

Number of participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken

	Not at all	To a slight extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	Does not apply	Don't know
This indicator is a strong measure for informing policy makers about the value of Extension community development work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This indicator fits well with our existing community development programming.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We are able to collect data each year for this indicator.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Survey response

### North Central region indicators

Percent responding “to a moderate or great extent” out of 54 responses

	Strong measure of Extension CRED work	Fits well with existing CRED programming	Able to collect data	Average across all three measures
Number of participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities	90.7%	86.8%	62.7%	80.1%
Number of volunteer hours for community generated work	80.4%	77.8%	55.8%	71.3%
Dollar value of grants & resources generated by communities	82.4%	70.0%	56.3%	69.5%
Dollar value of volunteer hours leveraged to deliver programs	76.1%	62.2%	62.8%	67.0%
Number of community or organizational plans/policies developed	72.5%	70.6%	56.3%	66.5%
Dollar value of organization and/or community-generated volunteer hours	77.8%	70.5%	51.2%	66.5%
Number of community or organizational, plans/policies adopted and/or implemented	73.1%	70.6%	54.2%	65.9%
Number of business plans developed	56.8%	45.5%	43.6%	48.6%
Number of businesses created	58.5%	39.0%	37.8%	45.1%
Number of jobs created	56.1%	31.7%	26.3%	38.0%
Number of jobs retained	51.2%	36.6%	26.3%	38.0%
Dollar value of efficiencies and savings	52.5%	27.5%	16.2%	32.1%

# Survey response

## Southern region indicators

Percent responding “to a moderate or great extent” out of 15 responses

	Strong measure of Extension CRED work	Fits well with existing CRED programming	Able to collect data	Average across all three measures
Number of plans (new or revised) adopted and that have begun to be implemented in community, agency, local government, business or disaster	84.6%	91.7%	84.6%	87.0%
Dollar value of grants generated by organizations or communities	86.7%	57.1%	60.0%	67.9%
Number of businesses created, retained, or expanded	86.7%	71.4%	42.9%	67.0%
Number of new alliances or networks formed through some type of formal agreement or MOU	73.3%	66.7%	60.0%	66.7%
Number of participants who report new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken	78.6%	80.0%	40.0%	66.2%
Number of jobs created/retained	92.9%	64.3%	35.7%	64.3%
Dollar value of other in-kind resources contributed by organization or community	92.9%	53.3%	28.6%	58.3%

## Selected comments about the indicators (North Central)

### Number of participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken

I think a bit more clarity on what NCRCRD considers "leadership roles and opportunities" would be helpful.

We gather such info in our cohort program post-program surveys

Shows how our programming can help build their skill set and confidence to take new roles.

### Dollar value of volunteer hours leveraged to deliver programs

Easy to estimate based on national volunteer \$ figures

While a number of our organization's work involves stakeholders, we don't often refer to them as 'volunteers' (though they often are volunteers).

Requires long term surveys



## Selected comments about the indicators (North Central)

### Number of community or organizational plans/policies developed

Often we are helping put communities in position to make these plans, we do not provide technical assistance to get them done.

This measures an output, but doesn't get at the impact of the work

Requires long term surveys

### Number of community or organizational, plans/policies adopted and/or implemented

Implementing and adopting differ. implementing plans has more impact to show decision-makers

Harder to collect this, as it depends on participant reporting further out from interaction with Extension programming.

Oftentimes, the adoption/implementation process is out of Extension's hands and at the mercy of other factors.



## Selected comments about the indicators (North Central)

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### Number of business plans developed

In our unit, this is done in conjunction w/ our SBDC

We do not directly assist businesses.

Data collection will continue to be a high priority to our federal and State authorities.

### Number of jobs created

This could be applicable for some workforce development training programs (Customer Service, BR&E, etc.). However, many times business decisions are not a result of our programming.

We do not have job creation as a goal for our team.



## Selected comments about the indicators (South)

### Dollar value of grants generated by organizations or communities

Extension work does not only capture the dollar value of grants but creates bonding and bridging within the community. This helps to create a sustainable and healthy community which is definitely difficult to quantify. But if we are able to quantify then it will be easy to inform policy makers about the value of extension work.\*

Is collectable but sometimes numbers reported by counties have to be vetted to ensure they are accurate.

I would say it is not a great indicator, but it IS an indicator that speaks loudly to policy makers about the value of publicly funded institutions. It reflects a ROI.

### Number of plans (new or revised) adopted and that have begun to be implemented in community, agency, local government, business or disaster

I don't think higher the number of plans indicates greater success in extension program. Rather implementation of couple of successful plans can be more effective for a community.\*

Would love to know more about implementation than just making a plan, but we are easily able to report this one.



## Selected comments about the indicators (South)

### Number of businesses created, retained, or expanded

It looks good to a policy maker. Whether we can say Extension saved these businesses (Is wholly accountable for the impact) is unrealistic. The best way (perhaps) to note is that CE worked closely with this business to stabilize or grow operations.

Requires medium and longer term follow up evaluation; important to provide tools to measure

### Number of jobs created/retained

If CE does workforce development, this is consistent.

Another indicator with an impactful story to tell with policy makers.



## Selected comments about the indicators (South)

Number of new alliances or networks formed through some type of formal agreement or MOU

As a catalyst for facilitating community change, the work of the agent should be opening new and creative partnerships. The MOU aspect just solidifies the reality of the impact.

This is important, but it shouldn't be an indicator since all of Extension works on this indicator.

Yes this is important as more networks and partnerships will be created, there is a chance that it will create more opportunities for working age population.\*



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\*Comment from staff member of an 1890 college/university

## Areas of community development programming that the current set of indicators does not capture (all respondents)

I would prefer to report on something like "communities taking action following Extension engagement" and also maybe something about the number of communities engaged (and maybe define engagement as X amount of hours spent with the community).

I would like to see an indicator for community engagement.

New partnerships or collaborations that were created as a result of Extension programs.

Fostering community connections & engagement thru dialogues, town halls, listening sessions

Facilitated conversations for organizations and communities



## Areas of community development programming that the current set of indicators does not capture (all respondents)

DEI. Consider the DEI competencies for Extension in the Extension Foundation  
<https://dei.extension.org/dei-competency-areas/>

We are doing work around reaching diverse populations, making communities more welcoming and climate adaptation that are not addressed at all.

Indicators shouldn't be solely based on the number of "butts in seats" . . . Indicators should be geared more towards the impact of the programming (i.e. behavior and knowledge changes), how we innovatively created and implemented programming, and show our collaborative efforts.\*

Community capacity-building such as disaster prep

Partnering with communities to address critical issues- such as food access; opioid and other substance misuse

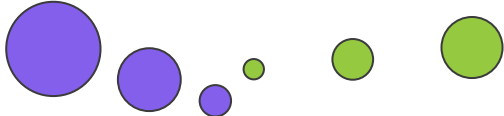
Food systems development work

\*Comment from staff member of an 1890 college/university

# Ideas for future indicators (all respondents)



Number of improvements made to physical spaces in cities and towns (e.g., facade renovations, revitalization of parks and public spaces, development/enhancement of recreational assets like biking and hiking trails, etc.).



Number of networks, partnerships, or collaborations created (emphasis on the network development we do)

Community capacity-building such as disaster prep



## Ideas for future indicators (all respondents)

Some indicators from Master Gardener program such as:  
Number residents that have modified existing practices that will assist with environmental stewardship and a sustainable community (end of the year survey for hotline calls)

We should also utilize storytelling and testimonials (in the participants words) and even showcase the impact on the extension staff.

Cultural integration. Tribal integration into education, outcomes, goals. This could be cultural art, history.\*\*

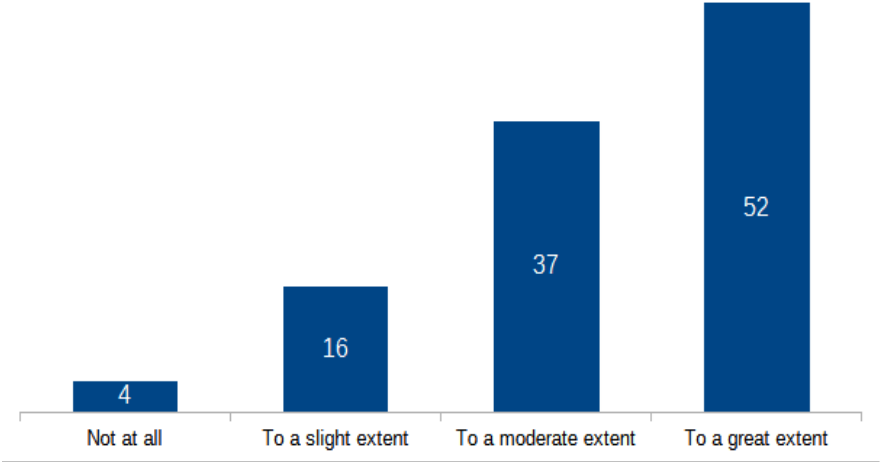


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\*\*Comment from staff member of a 1994 college/university

# Next steps

To what extent would you support the use of the Community Capitals Framework (CCF) to guide selection and reporting of impact indicators moving forward?



It could be challenging to quantify or qualify Extension's role in impacting the community capitals. That being said, the framework is an easy one to describe and accessible to stakeholders

The CCF is an approachable and useful tool. That said, I've had many colleagues groan and roll their eyes at its use, which raises concerns about acceptance.

We need to be mindful of how CCF is viewed from the tribal colleges. Is there a way it can be made culturally relevant?

This would capture both quantitative and qualitative information. It would also encourage storytelling. Using CCF would also keep the reporting in sync across all Land-Grant institutions and allow for diversity of thought.

# Next steps



## Example of a modified CCF framework that could be used to frame indicators

Capital	Definition
Human capital effects	Strengthened knowledge, attitudes, or skills among people or organizations.
Social capital effects	Strengthened or expanded trust or connections among people, groups and organizations.
Civic/political effects	Increased ability of organizations or communities to engage the public or influence local decisions.
Financial effects	Increased private or public wealth invested in the well-being of the community.
Built capital effects	Improvement of structures and infrastructures that contribute to the well-being of organizations or communities.
Cultural effects	Strengthened ability of organizations or communities to promote equity and inclusion, support diverse world views, and transmit cultural or historical knowledge to future generations.
Natural environment effects	Strengthened ability of organizations or communities to affect landscape, air, water, soil and biodiversity of both plants and animals.
Health Effects	Increased ability of organizations or communities to promote physical, mental, or spiritual well-being.





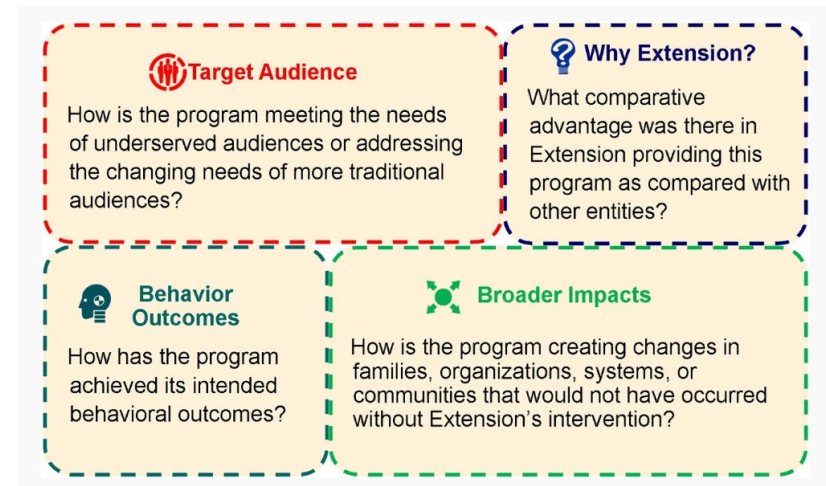
# Improving impact narratives

## USDA NIFA framework

- In 2-3 sentences, briefly describe the issue or problem that your project addresses.
- Briefly describe in non-technical terms how your major activities helped you achieve, or make significant progress toward, the goals and objectives described in your non-technical summary.
- Briefly describe how your target audience benefited from your project's activities.
- Briefly describe how the broader public benefited from your project's activities.

## Public value rubric

- **Presenting issue:** What was the public issue or need that Extension sought to address?
- **Extension's programmatic response:** Provide a brief discussion of the program and how it has been delivered.
- **Target audience**
- **Why Extension?**
- **Behavior or action outcomes**
- **Broader impacts**



Chazdon, Scott, Nathan Meyer, Caryn Mohr, and Alexis Troschinetz. "Public value posters: Conveying societal benefits of Extension programs through evaluation evidence." *Journal of Extension* 55, no. 4 (2017): 5.

<https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/joe/vol55/iss4/5/>

## Next steps

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- Community Development Indicators Retreat – two-day working meeting will be held in Minneapolis, MN on May 14 & 15, 2024.
- Funded by the North Central Cooperative Extension Association, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and the Southern Rural Development Center.
- Presentation of recommendations at the NACDEP conference June 17-20, 2024 in Houston.
- Program leaders will recommend timeline for implementation.





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