

V(A). Planned Program (Summary)

Program # 8

1. Name of the Planned Program

Economic and Community Development

Reporting on this Program

V(B). Program Knowledge Area(s)

1. Program Knowledge Areas and Percentage

KA Code	Knowledge Area	%1862 Extension	%1890 Extension	%1862 Research	%1890 Research
601	Economics of Agricultural Production and Farm Management	0%	20%		
605	Natural Resource and Environmental Economics	15%	10%		
608	Community Resource Planning and Development	70%	50%		
803	Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities	10%	10%		
805	Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services	5%	10%		
	Total	100%	100%		

V(C). Planned Program (Inputs)

1. Actual amount of FTE/SYs expended this Program

Year: 2013	Extension		Research	
	1862	1890	1862	1890
Plan	15.0	2.1	0.0	0.0
Actual Paid Professional	27.6	3.8	0.0	0.0
Actual Volunteer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

2. Actual dollars expended in this Program (includes Carryover Funds from previous years)

Extension		Research	
Smith-Lever 3b & 3c	1890 Extension	Hatch	Evans-Allen
160890	228030	0	0
1862 Matching	1890 Matching	1862 Matching	1890 Matching
478629	228030	0	0
1862 All Other	1890 All Other	1862 All Other	1890 All Other
2103574	293382	0	0

V(D). Planned Program (Activity)

1. Brief description of the Activity

Education and Training

- Conducted two-week Intensive Economic Development Training Course
- Conducted Impact Alabama Roundtable for top economic developers
- Conducted 2 statewide Extension Coordinator Trainings
- Conducted online entrepreneurship, business & community development and leadership training
- Administered AU Graduate Minor in Economic Development
- Conducted Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference
- Conducted social media entrepreneurship and business development support activities

Virtual Entrepreneurship Center

- Conducted 7 presentations including a conference lead by Auburn University & the Youth Entrepreneurship Camp lead by Tuskegee University
 - Administered the VEC online network consisting of 2300 individuals - project has members tied into the VEC from: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. There were over 600 visitors to the online video archives.
 - Increased the online video library and redesigned the website

Connections and Partnership

- Administered the Alabama Community Leaders Network
- Managed the Alabama Communities of Excellence program which focuses on communities with populations between 2,000 and 18,000
 - Partnered with Tuskegee University on the Black Belt Leadership project in providing series of leadership workshops
 - organized and conducted with numerous meetings with AU units that have roles in economic and community development
 - Participated on economic and community development advisory boards
 - Provided administrative support for I-85 Corridor Alliance
 - Partnered with AAMU and other institutions and agencies to organize and conduct programs to support community development in urban environments

Research and Communications

- Published quarterly Extension ACTION newsletter
- Published and disseminate research on topics relevant to state economic and community

development policy and practice

- Developed economic impact/forecast models for local communities using software from EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists)

- Maintained online resources to support the creation of businesses

Consulting, Community Support & Engagement

- Administered the Extension funded Rural Alabama Initiative grant program
- Coordinated a pilot Grassroots Leadership Initiative in 3 counties featuring civic engagement, planning & leadership activities

- Managed the "Stronger Economies Together" Project focused on regional economic development training and strategic planning

- Facilitated deliberative forums, roundtables and town meetings
- Facilitated community and regional strategic planning, assessment and asset mapping
- Explored development of the Small Town Institute on entrepreneurship, leadership & tourism
- Continued support for development of a commercial kitchen to serve central Alabama
- Continued communication and support for community organizations focused on developing Entrepreneurship programs & initiatives

- Supported regional efforts to promote entrepreneurship by local municipalities & chambers

2. Brief description of the target audience

The primary target audiences are current and future community leaders, decision makers, and local and state governmental officials in all communities across the state. The VEC targets individuals contemplating starting a business or preparing for future entrepreneurial endeavors. The target audience also includes existing entrepreneurs looking for additional training and support for current and future ventures. The project focuses on providing services to new and nontraditional populations that may be underserved by traditional entrepreneurship training activities.

3. How was eXtension used?

eXtension was used to identify webinars that would be of interest to the 81 Alabama Cooperative Extension System professionals who make up the Economic and Community Development Program Priority Team. Each week economic and community development webinars along with small business webinars are highlighted and sent to each team member. eXtension is one of the key resources used in the identification of these webinars. Furthermore several team members have joined the new Tourism and Recreation community of practice within eXtension.

V(E). Planned Program (Outputs)

1. Standard output measures

2013	Direct Contacts Adults	Indirect Contacts Adults	Direct Contacts Youth	Indirect Contacts Youth
Actual	82140	320576	6089	373040

2. Number of Patent Applications Submitted (Standard Research Output)

Patent Applications Submitted

Year: 2013
 Actual: 0

Patents listed

3. Publications (Standard General Output Measure)

Number of Peer Reviewed Publications

2013	Extension	Research	Total
Actual	0	0	0

V(F). State Defined Outputs

Output Target

Output #1

Output Measure

- This program area will include numerous output activities and methods as part of the Extension Team Projects (ETPs) which are described/explained in Section V(F). The success of many of these outcomes will be formally evaluated/measured by using individual activity evaluation forms designed specifically for each activity, the success of other activities and projects will be measured by the level of participation in the activity. The target boxes below indicate for each year the number of ETPs for this program area that will be formally evaluated using an evaluation instrument designed specifically for that activity.
 Not reporting on this Output for this Annual Report

Output #2

Output Measure

- The Virtual Entrepreneurship Center ETP was measured by levels of activity generated by extension staff and partner organizations. During the program year there was an increase in visibility of the VEC through agent presentations in their local communities, Presentations in urban areas to promote the program (Mobile, Shelby, Jefferson, Morgan, Baldwin, and Madison), distribution of materials at 3 regional conferences, and distribution of materials at various community events. An annual advisory group meet to evaluate program and provide feedback on future directions.

Year	Actual
2013	36

Output #3

Output Measure

- The Virtual Entrepreneurship Center ETP and activities was measured by levels of participation. The VEC is a joint ETP between all land grant institutions in the state. A key output measure for the project is program participation. During the program year individuals visited the VEC website, attended conferences, participated in workshops, and requested additional resources

on line and in person at the conferences and workshops. Participant numbers in the in the VEC are generated from the cumulative efforts of each institution.

Year	Actual
2013	600

Output #4

Output Measure

- A key output measure of the Virtual Entrepreneurship Center was the development and launching of additional training modules. These training modules cover the topic areas of: Business expansion, eco-systems, government opportunities, innovations and technology, social entrepreneurship, and start-up.

Year	Actual
2013	15

Output #5

Output Measure

- The Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI) program administered by the Economic and Community Development Institute offered grant support to worthwhile rural initiatives that help boost a wide range of economic and community development efforts. The focus of this program is on educational initiatives related to community and economic development and can include community and regional adult and youth leadership development programs, workforce development academies, technology camps for high school counselors, high school robotics competitions, computer skills training for adults, rural tourism development programs, and entrepreneurship training.

Year	Actual
2013	15

Output #6

Output Measure

- This program area included numerous output activities and the success of those projects and activities was measured by levels of participation. Included were Small business webinars and training sessions; Training courses, publications, and other resources for economic developers, community leaders, and small business; Alabama Community Leadership Network; Economic Development Plan for a 5-county Black Belt region (Marengo, Wilcox, Sumter, Perry, and Dallas counties) through SET; ACE leadership development programming; Bimonthly Rural Community and Economic Development Advisory Board meetings; Action newsletters; Two-state conference providing best practices in rural tourism; Comprehensive system of birding trails covering the entire state in which all 67 counties are involved; Regional effort to promote nine rural counties as a tourism destination.

Year	Actual
2013	115

V(G). State Defined Outcomes

V. State Defined Outcomes Table of Content

O. No.	OUTCOME NAME
1	Outcomes from this program area include: a) Number of community and economic development projects conducted, b) Community and economic development training resources developed, c) Number of community and economic development programs conducted, and d) number of educational grant projects funded.
2	Each ACES employee is required to provide a success story on the program activity which they felt best demonstrates the impacts of their work. These success stories contain the following elements: · Why: Explain the reason the program was done, or the situation or problem that the program addressed. · What: Specifically what was done and how it was done. · When: If this was a one-time event, the date it occurred. If it is was a series of events, or an on-going program, when it began. · Where: Specific location-- the county or counties involved. · Who and how many: The ?who? includes both who did the program and who were the clients of the program, as well as how many people were served. · So what: This is the part that gives the real meaning to ?success.? The basic question to be answered in this part is ?what difference did this program make.? The difference may be measured in terms of dollars, or in changes in habits, lifestyles or attitudes. Whenever possible use numbers to show the effect of the program. If it is not possible to use numbers, provide a qualitative measurement like client comments or another type of testimonial about the program. Since the Economic and Community Development program area is very broad in scope and contains multiple Extension Team Projects which have different outcomes measures, the impacts for this program area are best measured in the number and quality of the success stories generated by the individuals who work on these projects. Therefore, one very significant outcome measure is the number of success stories generated.
3	In order to assess the utility of the information and the value added to entrepreneurs' business activities a survey instrument was designed to measure each component of the VEC including: training modules, printed materials, and applicability of the training to their business

Outcome #1

1. Outcome Measures

Outcomes from this program area include: a) Number of community and economic development projects conducted, b) Community and economic development training resources developed, c) Number of community and economic development programs conducted, and d) number of educational grant projects funded.

2. Associated Institution Types

- 1862 Extension
- 1890 Extension

3a. Outcome Type:

Change in Knowledge Outcome Measure

3b. Quantitative Outcome

Year	Actual
2013	156

3c. Qualitative Outcome or Impact Statement

Issue (Who cares and Why)

Successful local community and economic development requires active engagement, connections among public, private, and education sector stakeholders, and strong local leadership. Natural and man-made disasters in Alabama over the recent years have provided two important lessons: the importance of working together to deal with crisis and the value of tourism to the economy. Of course, many communities may have good community leadership with excellent ideas for projects that would enhance local community and economic development. What they may lack is a source of funding to seed those local projects.

What has been done

Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI) grant program was created to provide seed money worthwhile community initiatives. Priority was given to projects featuring collaborations among organizations and jurisdictions in rural Alabama. Promoted education and training in economic development through the Intensive Economic Development Training Course, in leadership development through Alabama Community Leadership Network Conference, and in tourism development through annual Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference. Leadership specialists and County Extension Coordinators have conducted conferences, workshops and roundtables. The VEC collaborated with Tuskegee to conduct a Youth entrepreneurship camp and with all of the land grant agencies to provide high quality training modules to residents of the state. Of the 17 individuals who contacted the VEC for additional services all were pointed to resources provided by the VEC and or refereed to community agencies specializing in one on one counseling.

Results

ECDI funded 15 Rural Alabama Initiative projects for 2013 at a total of \$52,894, many focusing on community development, engagement, and youth leadership. The RAI grant application process was very competitive. Over \$1.3 million dollars has been distributed since 2007 to support 163 local economic and community development projects throughout Alabama. At least 6 cities/communities started new leadership development programs. Over 100 consultation sessions conducted in support of tourism-related economic development programs, primarily for rural and agri-tourism initiatives. Elected Officials Alliance in Pickens County brought together all mayors and county commissioners for monthly engagement and planning sessions. Strategic plans were developed for Western Colbert County, Washington County Economic Development Initiative, and the 5-county region in Alabama Black Belt (Perry, Marengo, Sumter, Dallas and Wilcox counties) within the "Stronger Economies Together" project. There were over 600 visitors to the online video archives. Of the centers visitors 12 individuals sought additional resources and or referrals for further assistance. During this program year the online video library was increased and the website was redesigned.

4. Associated Knowledge Areas

KA Code	Knowledge Area
605	Natural Resource and Environmental Economics
608	Community Resource Planning and Development
803	Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities
805	Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services

Outcome #2

1. Outcome Measures

Each ACES employee is required to provide a success story on the program activity which they felt best demonstrates the impacts of their work. These success stories contain the following elements:

- Why: Explain the reason the program was done, or the situation or problem that the program addressed.
- What: Specifically what was done and how it was done.
- When: If this was a one-time event, the date it occurred. If it is was a series of events, or an on-going program, when it began.
- Where: Specific location-- the county or counties involved.
- Who and how many: The ?who? includes both who did the program and who were the clients of the program, as well as how many people were served.
- So what: This is the part that gives the real meaning to ?success.? The basic question to be answered in this part is ?what difference did this program make.? The difference may be measured in terms of dollars, or in changes in habits, lifestyles or attitudes. Whenever possible use numbers to show the effect of the program. If it is not possible to use numbers, provide a qualitative measurement like client comments or another type of testimonial about the program.

Since the Economic and Community Development program area is very broad in scope and contains multiple Extension Team Projects which have different outcomes measures, the impacts for this program area are best measured in the number and quality of the success stories generated by the individuals who work on these projects. Therefore, one very significant outcome measure is the number of success stories generated.

Not Reporting on this Outcome Measure

Outcome #3

1. Outcome Measures

In order to assess the utility of the information and the value added to entrepreneurs' business activities a survey instrument was designed to measure each component of the VEC including: training modules, printed materials, and applicability of the training to their business

2. Associated Institution Types

- 1862 Extension
- 1890 Extension

3a. Outcome Type:

Change in Action Outcome Measure

3b. Quantitative Outcome

Year	Actual
2013	600

3c. Qualitative Outcome or Impact Statement

Issue (Who cares and Why)

Successful local community and economic development requires active engagement, connections among public, private, and education sector stakeholders, and strong local leadership. Of course, many communities may have good community leadership with excellent ideas for projects that would enhance local community and economic development. What they may lack is a source of funding to seed those local projects and provide training to local entrepreneurs. The VEC is designed to provide services to emerging entrepreneurs. These individuals are a part of the fastest growing sector in the state's economy, small business. State and local community leaders have placed a focus on the start-up and development of new small businesses. Based on current projections they will be a key part of the Alabama economy, tax base, and future employment outlook.

What has been done

During this program year the VEC (through working with its advisory board, contacting program participants, and conducting research) has endeavored to stay abreast of changes in the business environment as well as the needs of emerging entrepreneurs. As a result of these efforts timely topics were selected for new module development and launched on the VEC platform and advertised through traditional mechanisms and via social media.

Results

Individuals participating in the Virtual Entrepreneurship Center were contacted through social media and via email to provide feedback on the program. Of the program participants that responded to the survey they reported the following: 70% reported that they thought that the VEC videos and printed materials were extremely informative; 60% said that they were extremely likely to use the information to improve entrepreneurship activities; 50% were extremely likely to

recommend the VEC to others; 60% reported that they were extremely satisfied with the training and website.

4. Associated Knowledge Areas

KA Code	Knowledge Area
605	Natural Resource and Environmental Economics
608	Community Resource Planning and Development
803	Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities
805	Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services

V(H). Planned Program (External Factors)

External factors which affected outcomes

- Economy
- Appropriations changes
- Other (Attitudes towards partnerships, digital divide within the state and target population)

Brief Explanation

The largest single external factor for the next several years is most likely to be the nation's and state's weak economies. This has put pressures on Extension and changes in budgeting priorities within ACES have steadily and dramatically reduced funding for the Rural Alabama Initiative program. Over the past six years the budget for this program has been reduced by almost 90%, starting with \$500,000 the initial year and reduced to \$52,894 in 2013.

Outcomes were also influenced by the willingness of external groups to work collaboratively. For the most part partnerships with universities (University of Alabama, Tuskegee, etc.), governmental agencies (ADECA, USDA, etc.), non-profits (Alabama Association of Community Development Corporations, Alabama Rural Health Association, etc.) and the private sector (Alabama Power, Regions Bank, etc.) have enhanced outcomes. However, in a few instances reluctant attitudes by agencies and groups have hindered outcomes.

V(I). Planned Program (Evaluation Studies)

Evaluation Results

A year ago the 18-member ECDI Board of Advisors was created to provide feedback, direction, and advice. This external advisory board includes leaders of all major economic development organizations in Alabama. This has become the primary method of evaluating the effectiveness of ECDI in accomplishing its mission.

ECDI training courses are evaluated through participant evaluation surveys and all of these events indicate high satisfaction with all aspects of training provided. The success of other activities and projects was measured by the level of participation.

ECDI funded 15 Rural Alabama Initiative projects for 2013 at a total of \$52,894, many focusing on community development, engagement, and youth leadership.

- The Hospitality Job Readiness Program in Chilton County conducted six educational sessions with older teens to reinforce job skills needed for employment in the businesses that often cater to tourists. Six students accepted the scholarships and after four days of classroom study, five students passed the rigorous course completion test.
- The Hatchet Creek Festival in Coosa County drew 140 participants and included a two-day float trip, overnight camping, live music and educational presentations. Evaluations indicated that many had never floated Hatchet Creek and will likely return in the future. Participants reported spending around \$4,440 in tourism related expenditures.
- The Jobs for Life program in Cullman County involved a curriculum designed to remove roadblocks related to finding and maintaining employment for prison inmates. 40 people took part in the training and approximately 50% of participants completed the entire 16-session course. About 25% percent of participants have been released from jail to date and are actively seeking employment.
- The Elected Officials Symposium program in Pickens County has brought elected county and municipal officials together each quarter to discuss shared problems and possible cooperative solutions.

At least 6 cities/communities started new leadership development programs. Over 100 consultation sessions conducted in support of tourism-related economic development programs, primarily for rural and agri-tourism initiatives. Strategic plans were developed for Western Colbert County, Washington County Economic Development Initiative, and a 5-county region in Alabama Black Belt. Plans are being implemented.

Individuals participating in the Virtual Entrepreneurship Center were contacted through social media and via email to provide feedback on the program. Of the program participants that responded to the survey they reported the following: 70% reported that they thought that the VEC videos and printed materials were extremely informative; 60% said that they were extremely likely to use the information to improve entrepreneurship activities; 50% were extremely likely to recommend the VEC to others; 60% reported that they were extremely satisfied with the training and website.

Key Items of Evaluation

N/A